FOUR MYSTERY PLAYS

RUDOLF STEINER

8/- Twelfth

Four Mystery Plays

By

RUDOLF STEINER

Translated and Edited with the Author's Permission
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The Portal of Initiation

(A Rosicrucian Mystery)

The Soul's Probation

SECOND EDITION

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HARRY COLLISON

INTRODUCTION

THE four plays here produced in an English translation in two volumes, are perhaps best described as Christian Mystery Plays. They are intended to represent the experiences of the soul during initiation; or, in other words, the psychic development of man up to the moment when he is able to pierce the veil and see into the beyond. Through this vision he is then able to discover his real self and carry into effect the cryptic injunction graven on the old Greek temples Γνῶθι σεαυτόν, know thyself. At a later stage he comes to 'realize' himself, and finally learns the true significance of the Second Advent of our Lord. This process is known as the 'Rosicrucian' initiation—an initiation specially adapted to modern days—the time and manner of which depend on the individual nature and circumstances of each person.

The four plays form one continuous series, and the characters portrayed are of quite an ordinary kind except that they take more than the usual interest in spiritual matters, their first desire being so to improve their own mental and moral state as to make them able to benefit their fellows.

We find amongst them many types—the occult leader and the seeress who explains the coming of Christ. We are shown the spiritual development of

an artist, a scientist, a philosopher, a historian, a mystic, and a man of the world ; and we hear too the scoffing cynicism of the materialist Fox. We are led to realize how the characters are connected on the physical as well as the spiritual plane ; and we learn also about the nature of elementals and the twin forces of hindrance known as Lucifer and Ahriman ; the former of whom may be described as an embodiment of the spiritual impulse to action, an impulse always necessary but often distorted to bring about self-glorification rather than the ambition to do good ; the latter as an embodiment of an influence which seeks to materialize everything, thus hindering true spiritual growth and freedom. These two influences are given to man that he may gain free will by having perfect liberty to guide them in the one direction or in the other.

With regard to the writing and production of the plays, Doctor Steiner's habit is to write a play whilst the rehearsals are actually in progress, finishing it a few days before the first public performance, and the first play was written and acted in this manner in August, 1910, the second in August, 1911, the third in August, 1912, and the fourth in August, 1913. It was not until then that the complete key to the development of the characters was attainable. The last play explains the progress of the other three, and, following out the hint given in the second play by the account of the previous incarnation in the Middle Ages, traces the characters right back to their earlier incarnation in ancient Egypt.

The plays were performed in Munich every summer

under the personal direction of the author and were acted by men and women of several nationalities—all students of his teaching. The audiences numbered some two thousand and were composed entirely of his followers.

In 1913, owing to the difficulties and expense incurred each year in securing an appropriate theatre, his supporters acquired a plot of ground in Munich, and plans were designed for a theatre of their own, but the Munich authorities after much prevarication and delay finally prohibited its building.

Because of this, and because of the hostility which his writings and lectures had aroused in other parts of Germany, Doctor Steiner was led to set up his theatre in Switzerland at the little village of Dornach—not far from Bâle. Here a theatre is being built in accordance with his own designs and it is hoped that the plays will be performed there regularly as soon as the edifice is complete.

In conclusion I should like to express my gratitude to my friends and fellow students R. T. Gladstone, M.A., Cantab, and S. M. K. Gandell, M.A., Oxon, for their most valuable help in the very difficult task of translating the plays into English verse. Only a translator can appreciate the difficulties involved in preserving both the sense and rhythm of the original, and it is no exaggeration to say that without their aid the production of these works in English would not have been possible at the present time.

I should also like to take this occasion of thanking Doctor Steiner himself for permitting me to attend

the rehearsals and assist in the performances of the plays. It was a great privilege and pleasure for which I can never feel sufficiently grateful. And last, but not least, I have to thank him for his ever kind and patient attention to all my questions on the subject of these plays and of spiritual science in general.

H. Collison.

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THE PORTAL OF INITIATION

(A Rosicrucian Mystery Play)

The general public has never been admitted to the performance of these plays. The English editor has, however, ventured to give some indication of the costumes and scenery, though this can only be sufficient to give a general idea. The following is a summary of the scenes:

A Prelude

Scene 1: A debating room. Theodora's vision of the coming Christ.

Scene 2: Johannes' meditation among the mountains: 'Know thou thyself.'

Scene 3: Meditation chamber. Maria's separation.

Scene 4: The Spirit of the Elements. The Soul-world.

Scene 5: The subterranean rock temple. The consultation of the hierophants.

Scene 6: Continuation of Scene 4. Felicia: her First Fable. Germanus.

Scene 7: The Spirit-world. Maria and her soul powers. Theodora's vision of the past incarnation of Maria and Johannes. The scene ends with Benedictus' great mystic utterance.

An Interlude

Scene 8: The portrait of Capesius by Johannes. Strader's bewilderment.

Scene 9: Johannes' second meditation among the mountains three years later than Scene 2. 'Feel thou thyself.'

Scene 10: As in Scene 3. A trial for Johannes.

Scene 11: The Temple of the Sun. Destiny and debtors.

BEINGS AND PERSONS REPRESENTED

In the Prelude and Interlude:

Sophia.
Estella.
Two Children.

In the Mystery:

Johannes Thomasius.
Maria.
Benedictus.
Theodosius, whose prototype, as the Mystery proceeds, reveals itself as that of the Spirit of Love.
Romanus, whose prototype, as the Mystery proceeds, reveals itself as that of the Spirit of Action.
Germanus, whose prototype, as the Mystery proceeds, reveals itself as that of the Earth-brain.
Helena, whose prototype, as the Mystery proceeds, reveals itself as that of Lucifer.
Retardus, active only as a Spirit-influence.
Philia, *Astrid*, *Luna* } Friends of Maria, whose prototypes, as the Mystery proceeds, reveal themselves as spirits of Maria's soul-powers.
Professor Capesius.
Doctor Strader.
Felix Balde, who reveals himself as representative of the Spirit of Nature.

Felicia Balde, his wife.

The Other Maria, whose prototype, as the Mystery proceeds, reveals itself as the Soul of Love.

Theodora, a Seeress.

Ahriman and Lucifer, conceived as Soul-influences only.

The Spirit of the Elements, conceived as a Spirit-influence.

A Child, whose prototype, as the Mystery proceeds, reveals itself as a young soul.

As is usual in English stage directions, right means right of the stage, and not right of the audience as in the original German. So too the left is left of the stage.

The music at the representation of each play was by Mr. Adolf Arenson.

NOTES ON THE COSTUMES WORN: The costumes worn are those of every day, except that the female characters, over their dress, wear bright broad stoles of a colour to suit their character.

Benedictus is usually in a black riding suit, top boots, and a black mantle.

Lucifer has golden hair, wears crimson robes, and stands upon the right of *Johannes*. *Lucifer* appears as female.

Ahriman, the conventional Satan, wears yellow robes and stands upon the left of *Johannes*.

In the fifth and eleventh scenes and when in spirit form or acting as hierophant, *Benedictus* wears a long white robe over which is a broad golden stole with mystic emblems in red. He also wears a golden mitre and carries a golden crosier.

On such occasions *Theodosius* is similarly robed except that the stole, mitre, and crosier are silver and the emblems blue. Similarly the stole, mitre, and crosier of *Romanus* are bronze and the emblems green. *Retardus*' costume is a mixture of the above three.

Germanus wears long brownish robes and is made to appear like a giant with heavy clogs, as if tied to earth. Scene 6.

Philia, Astrid, and *Luna* in the seventh and eleventh scenes and in the other plays have conventional angel-forms ; *Astrid* is always in the centre of this group ; *Luna* is on her right ; *Philia* on her left.

Theodora wears white and has angel's wings in the seventh and eleventh scenes.

The Other Maria is dressed like a spirit (except in Scene 1) but one associated with rocks and precious stones.

THE PORTAL OF INITIATION

Prelude

Sophia's room. The colour scheme is a yellow red. Sophia, with her two children, a boy and a girl; later, Estella.

Children (singing, whilst Sophia accompanies them on the piano):

The light of the sun is flooding
The breadths of space;
The song of the birds is filling
The heights of air;
The tender plants are shooting
From the kind earth;
And human souls in reverent gratitude,
Rise to the spirits of the world.

Sophia: Now, children, go to your rooms and think over the words we have just practised.

(*Sophia leads the children out.*)

(*Enter Estella.*)

Estella: How do you do, Sophy? I hope I'm not intruding?

Sophia: Oh no, Estelle. I am very glad to see you.

(*Asks Estella to be seated and seats herself.*)

Estella : Have you good news from your husband ?

Sophia : Very good. He writes to me saying that he is interested in the Congress of Psychologists ; though the manner in which they treat many great questions there does not appeal to him. However, as a student of souls, he is interested in just those methods of spiritual shortsightedness which makes it impossible for men to obtain a clear view of essential mysteries.

Estella : Does he not intend speaking on an important subject, himself ?

Sophia : Yes, on a subject that seems important both to him and to me. But the scientific views of those present at the Congress prevent his expecting any results from his arguments.

Estella : I really came in, dear Sophy, to ask whether you would come with me this evening to a new play called *Outcasts from Body and from Soul.* I should so like to hear it with you.

Sophia : I'm sorry, my dear Estelle, but to-night is the date set for the performance of the play, which our society has been rehearsing for a long time.

Estella : Oh yes, I had forgotten. But it would have been such a pleasure to have spent this evening with my old friend. I had set my heart on having you beside me, and gazing with you into the hidden depths of our present-day life. . . . I only hope that this world of ideas, in which you move, and which is so strange to me, will not finally destroy that bond of sympathy, which has united our hearts since we were at school together.

Sophia : You have often said that before ; and yet

you have always had to admit that our divergent opinions need not erect barriers between those feelings which have existed between us in our companionship from our youth upwards.

Estella: True, I have said so. Yet it always arouses a sense of bitterness in me, when, as the years roll on, I see how your affections are estranged from those things in life that seem to me worth while.

Sophia: Still, we may be of much mutual help to one another if we recognize and realize the various points of view which we reach through our different inclinations.

Estella: Yes! My reason tells me that you are right. And yet there is something in me that rebels against your view of life.

Sophia: Why not candidly admit that what you require of me is the renunciation of my inmost soul-life?

Estella: But for one thing, I should admit even that. And that is, that you always claim that your view is the more profound. I can readily understand that people whose conceptions differ radically may still meet in sympathy of feeling. But the nature of your ideas actually forces upon you an inner assumption of a certain superiority. Others can compare views and realize that they do indeed diverge towards different standpoints, but they nevertheless stand related by an equality of values. You, however, seem unable to do this. You regard all other views as proceeding from a lower degree of human development.

Sophia: But you realize, I hope, from our previous discussions, that those who think as I do, do not finally

measure the character of man by his opinions or by his knowledge. And while we consider our ideas such, that without vital realization of them life has no valid foundations, we nevertheless try most earnestly not to over-estimate the value of the individual, who has been permitted to become an instrument for the manifestation of this view of life.

Estella: All that sounds very well, but it does not remove my one suspicion. I cannot close my eyes to the fact, that a world-view which ascribes to itself illimitable depth must needs lead through the mere appearance of such depth to a certain superficiality. I rate our friendship too high to point out to you those among your companions who, whilst they swear allegiance to your ideas, yet display spiritual arrogance of the most unmitigated sort, despite the fact that the barrenness and banality of their soul speaks in their every word and in all their conduct. Nor do I wish to call your attention to the callousness and lack of sympathy shown by so many of your adherents towards their fellow men. The greatness of your own soul has never permitted you to stand aloof from that which daily life requires at the hands of the man whom we call good. And yet the fact that you leave me alone on this occasion, when true and artistic life comes to be voiced, shows me that your ideas too with reference to this life are to a certain extent superficial—if you will forgive my saying so.

Sophia: And wherein lies this superficiality?

Estella: You ought to know. You have known me long enough to understand how I have wrenched myself

away from that manner of life, which, day in and day out, only struggles to follow tradition and convention.

I have sought to understand why so many people suffer, as it seems, undeservedly. I have tried to approach the heights and depths of life. I have consulted the sciences, so far as I could, to learn what they disclose.

But let me hold fast to the one point which this moment presents to us. I am aware of the nature of true art; I believe I understand how it seizes upon the essentials of life and presents to our souls the true and higher reality. I seem to feel the beating of the pulse of time, when I permit such art to influence me, and I am horrified when I have to think what it is that you, Sophy, prefer to this interest in living art. You turn to what seem to me the obsolete, dogmatically allegorical themes, to gaze on a show of puppets, instead of on living beings, and to wonder at symbolical happenings which stand far away from all that appeals to our pity and to our active sympathies in daily life.

Sophia: My dear Estelle, that is exactly the fact that you will not grasp—that the richest life is to be found just there where you only see a fantastic web of thoughts: and that there may be, and are, people who are compelled to call your living reality mere poverty—if it be not measured by the spiritual source from whence it comes. Possibly my words sound harsh to you. But our friendship demands absolute frankness. Spirit itself is as unknown to you as it is to the multitude. In its place you know only the bearer of knowledge. It is only the thought side of spirit of which you are aware. You have no conception of the

living, the creative spirit, which endows men with elemental power, even as the germinal power of nature shapes living entities. Like many another, for instance, you call things in art which deny the spirit, as I conceive it, naïve and original. Our conception of the world unites a full and conscious freedom with the power of spontaneous creation. We consciously absorb this power, and do not thereby rob it of its freshness, its fullness, and its originality. You believe that the character of man shapes itself, and that we can merely form thoughts and considerations *about* it. You will not see that thought itself actually merges into creative spirit; reaching the very fountain of Being; and developing thence into an actual creative germ.

Our ideas do not *teach*, any more than the seed-power within a plant *teaches* it how to grow. It is the actual growth itself, and in like manner do our ideas flow into our very being, kindling and dispensing life. To the ideas that have come to me, I am indebted for all that makes life worth while; not only for the courage, but also for the insight and power that make me hopeful of so training my children, that they shall not only be capable and useful in ordinary everyday life, in the old traditional sense, but that they shall at the same time carry inward peace and contentment within their souls. I have no wish to stray from the point, but I will say just one thing. I believe—nay I know—that the dreams which you share with so many can only be realized when men succeed in uniting what they call the realities of life with those deeper experiences, which you have so often termed dreams and fantasies. You may be astonished if I confess it to you: but

much that seems true art to you is to me a mere fruitless critique of life. No hunger is stilled, no tears are dried, no source of degeneracy is discovered, when merely the outer show of hunger, or tear-stained faces, or degenerates are shown upon the stage. And the customary method of that presentation is unspeakably distant from the true depths of life, and the true relationship between beings.

Estella: I understand your words indeed, but they merely show me that you do prefer to indulge in fancies, rather than to look upon the realities of life. Our ways, indeed, part.—I see that my friend is denied me to-night. (*Rises.*) I must leave you now. But we remain friends, as of old, do we not?

Sophia: We must indeed remain friends. (*While these last words are spoken, Sophia conducts her friend to the door.*)

Curtain

Scene I

Room. Dominant note rose-red. Large rose-red chairs are arranged in a semicircle. To the left of the stage a door leads to the auditorium. One after the other, the speakers introduced enter by this door; each stopping in the room for a time. While they do so, they discuss the discourse they have just heard in the auditorium, and what it suggests to them.

Enter first Maria and Johannes, then others. The speeches which follow are continuations of discussions already begun in the auditorium.

Maria:

My friend, I am indeed distressed to see
Thy spirit and thy soul in sadness droop,
And powerless to help the bond that binds
And that has bound us both for ten blest years.
E'en this same hour, filled with a portent deep
In which we both have heard and learned so much
That lightens all the darkest depths of soul,
Brought naught but shade and shadow unto thee.
Aye, after many of the speakers' words,
My listening heart could feel the very dart
That deeply wounded thine. Once did I gaze
Into thine eyes and saw but happiness
And joy in all the essence of the world.

In pictures beauty-steeped thy soul held fast
Each fleeting moment, bathed by sunshine's glow—
Flooding with air and light the forms of men
Unsealing all the depths and doubts of Life.
Unskilled as yet thine hand to body forth
In concrete colour-schemes, those living forms
That hovered in thy soul ; but in the hearts
Of both of us there throbbed the joyous faith
And certain hope that future days would teach
Thine hand this art—to pour forth happiness
Into the very fundaments of Being ;
That all the wonders of thy spirit's search
Unfolding visibly Creation's powers
Through every creature of thine art would pour
Soul rapture deep into the hearts of men.
Such were our dreams through all those days of yore
That to thy skill, mirrored in beauty's guise,
The weal of future men would trace its source.
So dreamed mine own soul of the goal of thine.
Yet now the vital spark of fashioning fire
That burned within thee seems extinct and dead.
Dead thy creative joy : and well-nigh maimed
The hand, which once with fresh and youthful strength
Guided thy steadfast brush from year to year.

Johannes :
Alas, 'tis true ; I feel as if the fires
That erstwhile quickened in my soul are quenched.
Mine eye, grown dull, doth no more catch the gleam
Shed by the flickering sunlight o'er the earth.
No feeling stirs my heart, when changing moods
Of light and shade flow o'er the scenes around.

Still lies my hand, seeking no more to chain
Into a lasting present fleeting charms,
Shown forth by magic elemental powers
From utmost depths of Life before mine eyes.
No new creative fire thrills me with joy.
For me dull monotone obscures all life.

Maria:
My heart is deeply grieved to hear that thou
Dost find such emptiness in everything
Which thrives as highest good and very source
Of sacred life itself within my heart.
Ah, friend, behind the changing scenes of life
That men call ' Being,' true life lies concealed
Spiritual, everlasting, infinite ;
And in that life each soul doth weave its thread.
I feel afloat in spirit potencies,
That work, as in an ocean's unseen depths,
And see revealéd all the life of men,
As wavelets on the ocean's upturned face.
I am at one with all the sense of Life
For which men restless strive, and which to me
Is but the inner self that stands revealed.
I see, how oftentimes it binds itself
Unto the very kernel of man's soul,
And lifts him to the highest that his heart
Can ever crave. Yet as it lives in me
It turns to bitter fruitage, when mine own
Touches another's being. Even so
Hath this, my destiny, worked out in all
I willed to give thee, when thou cam'st in love.
Thy wish it was to travel at my side

Unhesitating all the way, that soon
Should lead thee to a full and perfect art.
Yet what hath happened ? All, that in mine eyes
Stood forth revealed in its own naked Truth
As purest life, brought death, my friend, to thee
And slew thy spirit.

Johannes :

Aye. 'Tis so indeed.
What lifts thy soul to Heaven's sun-kissed heights
When through thy life it comes into mine own
Thrusts my soul down, to death's abysmal gloom.
When in our friendship's rosy-fingered dawn
To this revealment thou didst lead me on,
Which sheds its light into the darkened realms,
Where human souls do enter every night,
Bereft of conscious life, and where full oft
Man's being wanders erring : whilst the night
Of Death makes mock at Life's reality.
And when thou didst reveal to me the truth
Of life's return, then did I know full well
That I should grow to perfect spirit-man.
Surely, it seemed, the artist's clear keen eye,
And certain touch of a creator's hand,
Would blossom for me through thy spirit's fire
And noble might. Full deep I breathed this fire
Into my being ; when—behold—it robbed
The ebb and flow of all my spirit's power.
Remorselessly it drove out from my heart
All faith in this our world. And now I reach
A point where I no longer clearly see,
Whether to doubt or whether to believe

The revelation of the spirit-worlds.
Nay more, I even lack the power to love
That which in thee the spirit's beauty shows.

Maria:
Alas! The years that pass have taught me this:
That mine own way to live the spirit-life
Doth change into its opposite, whene'er
It penetrates another's character.
And I must also see how spirit-power
Grows rich in blessing when, by other paths,
It pours itself into the souls of men.

(*Enter Philia, Astrid, and Luna.*)

It floweth forth in speech, and in these words
Lies power to raise to realms celestial
Man's common mode of thinking; and create
A world of joy, where erstwhile brooded gloom.
Aye, it can change the spirit's shallowness
To depths of earnest feeling; and can cast
Man's character in sure and noble mould.
And I—yes, I am altogether filled
By just this spirit-power, and must behold
The pain and desolation that it brings
To other hearts, when from mine own it pours.

Philia:
It seemed as though the voices of some choir

(*Enter Prof. Capesius and Dr. Strader.*)

Mingled together, uttering manifold
Conceptions and opinions, each his own,
Of these who formed our recent gathering.

Full many harmonies there were indeed,
But also many a harsh-toned dissonance.

Maria:
Ah, when the words and speech of many men
Present themselves in such wise to the soul,
It seems as though man's very prototype
Stood centred there in secret mystery:
Became through many souls articulate,
As in the rainbow's arch pure Light itself
Grows visible in many-coloured rays.

Capesius:
Through changing scenes of many centuries
We wandered year on year in earnest search;
Striving to fathom deep the living force
That dwelt within the souls of those who sought
To probe and scan the fundaments of being,
And set before man's soul the goals of life.
We thought that in the depths of our own souls
We lived the higher powers of thought itself;
And thus could solve the riddles set by Fate.
We felt we had, or seemed at least to feel,
Sure basis in the logic of our mind
When new experiences crossed our path
Questioning there the judgment of our soul.
Yet now such basis wavers, when amazed
I hear to-day, as I have heard before,
The mode of thought taught by these people here.
And more and more uncertain do I grow,
When I perceive, how powerfully in life
This mode of thought doth work. Full many a day

Have I spent thus, thinking how I might shape
Time's riddles as they solved themselves to me
In words, that hearts might grasp and trembling feel.
Happy indeed was I, if I could fill
Only the smallest corner of some soul
Amongst my audience with the warmth of life.
And oftentimes it seemed success was mine,
Nor would I make complaint of fruitless days.
Yet all results of teaching thus could lead
Only to recognition of this truth
So loved and emphasized by men of deeds,
That in the clash of life's realities,
Thoughts are dim shadows, nothing more nor less :
They may indeed wing life's creative powers
To due fruition, but they cannot shape
And mould our life themselves. So have I judged
And with this modest comment was content :
Where pale thoughts only work, all life is lamed
And likewise all that joins itself to life.
More potent than the ripest form of words,
However art might weave therein her spell,
Seemed nature's gift, man's talents—and more strong
The hand of destiny to mould his life.
Tradition's mountainweight, and prejudice
With dull oppressive hand will always quench
The strength of e'en the very best of words.
But that which here reveals itself in speech
Gives men, who think as I do, food for thought.
Clearly we saw the kind of consequence
That comes when sects, in superheated speech,
Blind souls of men with dogma's seething stream.
But nought here of such spirit do we find ;

Here only reason greets the soul, and yet
These words create the actual powers of life,
Speaking unto the spirit's inmost depths.
Nay even to the kingdom of the Will
This strange and mystic Something penetrates ;
This Something, which to such as I, who still
Wander in ancient ways, seems but pale thought.
Impossible, it seems, to disavow
Its consequences ; none the less, myself
I cannot quite surrender to it yet.
But it all speaks with such peculiar charm
And not as though it really meant for me
The contradiction of experience.
It almost seems as if this Something found
The kind of man I am, insufferable.

Strader :

I would associate myself in fullest sense
With every one of thy last spoken words :
And still more sharply would I emphasize
That all results in our soul-life, which seem
To spring forth from the influence of ideas,
Cannot in any wise decide for us
What actual worth of knowledge they conceal.
Whether there lives within our mode of thought,
Error or truth—'tis certain this alone
The verdict of true science can decide.
And no one would with honesty deny
That words, which are, in seeming only, clear,
Yet claim to solve life's deepest mysteries,
Are quite unfit for such a scrutiny.
They fascinate the spirit of mankind,

And only tempt the heart's credulity ;
Seeming to open door into that realm
Before which, humble and perplexed, now stands
The strict and cautious search of modern minds.
And he who truly follows such research
Is bound in honour to confess that none
Can know whence streams the wellspring of his thought,
Nor fathom where the depths of Being lie.
And though confession such as this is hard
For souls who all too willingly would gauge
What lies beyond the ken of mortal mind,
Yet every glance of every thinker's soul
Whether directed to the outer side,
Or turned towards the inner depths of life,
Scans but that boundary and naught beside.
If we deny our rational intellect
Or set aside experience, we sink
In depths unfathomable, bottomless.
And who can fail to see how utterly
What passeth here for revelation new,
Fails to fit in with modern modes of thought.
Indeed it needs but little thought to see,
How totally devoid this method is
Of that, which gives all thought its sure support
And guarantees a sense of certainty.
Such revelations may warm listening hearts,
But thinkers see in them mere mystic dreams.

Philia :

Aye, thus would always speak the science, won
By stern sobriety and intellect.

But that suffices not unto the soul,
That needs a steadfast faith in its own self.
She ever will give heed to words that speak
To her of spirit. All she dimly sensed
In former days, she striveth now to grasp.
To speak of the Unknown may well entice
The thinker, but no more the hearts of men.

Strader :

I too can realize how much there lies
In that objection ; how it seems to strike
The idle dreamer, who would only spin
The threads of thought, and seek the consequence
Of this or that premise, which he himself
Hath formed beforehand. Me—it touches not—
No outer motive guided me to thought.
In childhood I grew up 'mid pious folk
And, following their custom, steeped my soul
In sense-intoxicating images
Of future sojourn in celestial realms,
Wherewith they seek to comfort and beguile
Man's ignorance and man's simplicity.
Within my boyish soul I sensed the throb
Of utmost ecstasy, when reverently
I raised my thoughts to highest spirit-worlds ;
And prayer was then my heart's necessity.
Thereafter in a cloister was I trained ;
Monks were my teachers, and in mine own heart
The deepest longing was to be a monk,—
An echo of my parent's ardent wish.
For consecration did I stand prepared
When chance did drive me from the cloistered cell ;

And to this chance I owe deep gratitude.
For, many days before chance saved my soul
It had been robbed of inward peace and quiet;
For I had read and learned of many things,
That have no place within the cloister-gate.
Knowledge of nature's working came to me
From books that were forbidden to mine eyes;
And thus I learned new scientific thought.
Hard was the struggle as I sought the path
Wandering through many a way to find mine own;
Nor did I ever gain by cunning thought
Whate'er of truth revealed itself to me.
In fierce-fought battles have I torn the roots
From out my spirit's soil of all that brought
Peace and contentment to me when a child.
I understand indeed the heart that fain
Would soar up to the heights—but for myself,
When once I recognized that all I learned
From spirit-teaching was an empty dream,
I was compelled to find the surer soil
That science and discovery create.

Luna:
We may surmise, each after his own kind,
Where sense and goal of life doth lie for each.
I altogether lack the power to prove
According to the science of to-day,
What spirit-teaching I have here received:
But clear within my heart I feel and know
My soul would die without this spirit-lore,
As would my body, if deprived of blood.
And thou, dear doctor, 'gainst our cause dost fight

With many words, and what thou now hast told
Of thy life's conflict lends them weight indeed
Even with those who do not understand
Thy learned argument. Yet would I ask

(*Enter Theodora.*)

Exactly why it is that hearts of men
Receive the word of Spirit readily,
As though self-understood : yet when man seeks
Food for his spirit in such learned words
As thou didst use his heart grows chill and cold.

Theodora :

Although I am at home 'mid just such men
As circle round me here, yet strangely sounds
This speech I have just heard.

Capesius :

What strangeness there ?

Theodora :

I may not say. Do thou, Maria, tell.

Maria :

Our friend has oftentimes explained to us
What strange experiences come to her.
One day she felt herself completely changed,
And none could understand her altered state.
Estrangement met her wheresoe'er she turned
Until she came into our circle here.
Not that we fully understand ourselves
What she possesses and what no one shares.
Yet we are trained by this our mode of thought
The unaccustomed to appreciate,

And feel with every mood of humankind.
One moment in her life, our friend perceived,
All that seemed hers aforetime, disappear ;
The past was all extinguished in her soul.
And since these wondrous changes came to her,
This mood of soul hath oft renewed itself ;
It doth not long endure ; and other times
She lives her life as ordinary folk.
Yet whensoe'er she falls into this state,
The gift of memory doth fade away.
She loseth from her eyes the power to see
And senseth her surroundings, seeing not.
With a peculiar light her eyes then glow,
And pictured forms appear to her. At first
They seemed like dreams ; anon they grew so clear,
That we could recognize without a doubt
Some prophecy of distant future days.
Full many a time have we seen this occur.

Capesius :
It is just this that little pleaseth me
Amongst these men ; who mingle with good sense
And logic, superstition's fallacies.
'Twas ever thus where men have walked this path.

Maria :
If thou canst still speak so, thou dost not yet
Perceive our attitude towards these things.

Strader :
Well, as for me, I freely must confess,
That I would sooner revelations hear

Than speak of questionable spirit-themes.
For even if I fail to read aright
The riddle of such dreams, yet those at least
I count as facts ; and would 'twere possible
To see one instance of the mystery
Of this strange spirit-mood before mine eyes.

Maria :
Perchance it is—for look, she comes again.
And it doth seem to me as though e'en now
This mystic spirit-mood would show itself.

Theodora :
I am compelled to speak. Before my soul
A pictured form stands wrapped in robes of light ;
From which strange words are sounding in mine ears.
I feel myself in future centuries,
And men do I behold as yet unborn :—
They also see the pictured form ; they too
Can hear the words it speaks, which thus resound—
' O ye, who lived in faith's security,
Take comfort now in sight, and look on Me.
Receive new life through Me. For I am He
Who lived within the souls of those who sought
To find Me in themselves, by following
The gospel-words My messengers did bring
And by their own devotion's inward power.
The light of sense ye saw—believe ye now
In the creative spirit-world beyond.
For now indeed ye have yourselves achieved
One atom of divine prophetic sight.
Oh, breathe it deep, and feel it in your souls.'

A human form steps from that sphere of light.
And speaks to me : ' Thou shalt make known to all
Who will give ear to thee, that thou hast seen
What all mankind shall soon experience :
Once, long ago, Christ lived upon the earth,
And from this life ensued the consequence
That in soul-substance clad He hovers o'er
The evolution of humanity,
In union with the earth's own spirit-sphere ;
And though as yet invisible to men,
When in such form He manifests Himself,
Since now their being lacks that spirit sight,
Which first will show itself in future times ;
Yet even now this future draweth nigh
When that new sight shall come to men on earth.
What once the senses saw, when Christ did live
Upon the earth ; this shall be seen by souls
When soon the time shall reach its fullness due.'

(*Exit.*)

Maria :

This is the first time we have heard her speak
In such a manner to so many folk.
At other times she felt constrained to speech,
Only when two or three were gathered round.

Capesius :

To me indeed it seems most curious,
That she, as though commanded or required,
Should find herself to revelation urged.

Maria :

It may so seem ; but we know well her ways
If at this moment she desired to send

Her inward soul-voice deep into your souls,
The only reason was, that unto you
The source, whence came her voice, desired to speak.

Capesius :

Concerning this strange future gift of sight,
Whereof she spake, as dreaming, we have heard
That he, who of this circle is the soul,
Hath oft already given full report.
Is it not possible that from his words
The content of her speech hath origin,
The mode of utterance coming from herself ?

Maria :

If matters thus did stand, we should not deem
Her words of any consequence or weight :
But we have tested this condition well.
Before she came into our circle here,
Our friend had never heard in any way
Of that same leader's speeches, nor had we
Heard aught of her before she came to us.

Capesius :

Then what we have to deal with is a state,
Such as so often happens, contrary
To all the laws of nature ; and which we
Must merely estimate as some disease.
And only healthy thought, securely based
On fully conscious sense-impressions, can
Pass judgment on the riddles set by life.

Strader :

Yet even here one fact presents itself ;
And what we now have heard must have some worth—

For, even if we set aside all else
It doth compel the thought that spirit-power
Can cause thought-transference from soul to soul.

Astrid:
Ah me, if ye would only dare to tread
The ground your mode of thought doth choose to shun:
As snow before the sunlight's piercing glare
Your vain delusion needs must melt away,
Which makes the moods revealéd, in such minds
Appear diseased, abnormal, wonderful.
They are suggestive, but they are not strange.
And small this wonder doth appear to me
When I compare it with the myriad
Of wonders that make up my daily life.

Capesius:
Nay, nay, one thing it is to recognize
What lies before our eyes on every side,
But quite another, what is shown us here.

Strader:
Of spirit 'tis not necessary to speak
Until there are things shown to us which lie
Outside the strictly circled boundary
Set by the laws of scientific thought.

Astrid:
The clear shaft of the sunlight on the dew
Which glistens in the morning's golden light,
(*Enter Felix Balde.*)

The hurling stream that riseth 'neath the rock,
The thunder rumbling in the cloud-wrapped sky,
All these do speak to me a spirit tongue :
I strove to understand it ; and I know
That of this speech's meaning and its might,
Only a faint reflection can be glimpsed
Through your investigations, as they are.
And when that kind of speech sank deep within
My heart, I found my soul's true joy at last.
Nor could aught else, but human words alone
And spirit teaching grant this gift to me.

Felix Balde :
Those words rang true indeed.

Maria :
I must essay
To tell what joy fills all my heart to see
(*Enter Felicia Balde.*)
For the first time here with us yonder man,
Of whom we oft have heard ; and joy doth cause
The wish to see him here full many times.

Felix Balde :
It is not usual for me that I should
Associate with such a crowd of men :
And not alone unusual——

Felicia :
Aye, 'tis so.
His nature drives us into solitude
Away from all ; year in, year out, we hear

Scarce any other converse save our own.
And if this good man here from time to time
(*Pointing to Capesius.*)
Came not to linger in our cottage home,
We scarce should realize that other men,
Besides ourselves, live on the earth at all.
And if the man, who spake such wondrous words
But recently in yonder lecture-hall,
And who affected us so potently,
Did not full many a time my Felix meet,
When he is gone about his daily tasks,
Ye would know nought of our forgotten life.

Maria:
So the professor often visits you?

Capesius:
Assuredly. And I may tell you all,
The very deep indebtedness I feel
To this good woman, who doth give to me
In rich abundance, what none other can.

Maria:
And of what nature are these gifts of hers?

Capesius:
If I would tell the tale, then must I touch
A thing that verily doth seem to me
More wonderful than much that here I've heard,
In that it speaks more nearly to my soul.
But were I in some other place, these words
Would hardly pass the barrier of my lips;

Yet here they seem to flow therefrom with ease.
In my soul-life there often comes a time
When it doth feel itself pumped out and dry.
It seems as though the very fountain-head
Of knowledge had run dry within my heart.
Then can I find no word of any kind
Worthy to speak or worthy to be heard.
And when I feel such spirit barrenness
I flee to these good people, and seek rest
In their reviving, peaceful solitude ;
Then Mistress Felix tells me many a tale
Set forth in wondrous pictures, manifold,
Of beings, dwelling in the land of dreams,
Who lead a joyous life in fairy realms.
When thus she speaks, her tone and speech recall
Some oft-told legend of the ancient days.
I ask no question whence she finds these words
But this one thing alone I clearly know :
That new life flows therefrom into my soul,
And sweeps away its dull paralysis.

Maria :
To hear such splendid witness to the skill
Of Dame Felicia doth, in wondrous wise,
Harmoniously blend in every way
With all that Benedictus told to us
About his friend's deep hidden knowledge-founts.

Felix Balde :
He who spake words to us just now, which showed
(*Benedictus appears at the door.*)

How in the realm of universal space,
And vast eternities his spirit dwelt,
Hath surely little need to speak o'er much
Of simple men.

Benedictus :

Thou errest friend. For me
Infinite value hath each word of thine.

Felix Balde :

It was presumption only, and the bent
Of idle talk, when thou didst honour me
To wander at thy side our mountain paths.
Only because thou didst conceal from me
How much thyself dost know, I dared to speak.
But now our time is up, and we must go—
A long way hence doth lie our quiet home.

Felicia :

It hath been most refreshing once again
To come amongst mankind : and yet I fear
It will not happen very soon again :
There is no other life which Felix deems
Better than living in his mountain heights.

(*Exeunt Felix and his wife.*)

Benedictus :

Indeed I well believe his wife is right,
Nor will he come again for many days.
It needed much to bring him here to-day.
And yet the reason lies not in himself
Why no one knoweth aught of him or his.

Capesius :
He only seemed to me eccentric, strange ;
And many an hour I found him talkative
When I was with him ; but his mystic speech
And strange discourse remained obscure to me,
When he revealed all that he claims to know.
He spoke of solar beings housed in rocks ;
Of lunar demons, who disturb their work ;
And of the sense of number hid in plants ;
And he who listens to him cannot long
Keep clear the thread of meaning in his words.

Benedictus :
And yet 'tis also possible to feel
As if the powers of Nature, through these words,
Sought to reveal themselves in their true state.
(*Exit.*)

Strader :
Already do I feel forebodings strange
That now dark hours are coming in my life.
For since the days of cloistered solitude,
Where I was taught such knowledge, and thereby
Struck to the very darkest depth of soul,
Not one experience has stirred me so,
As this weird vision of the seeress here.

Capesius :
Indeed I cannot see that aught of that
Should prove unnerving. And I fear, my friend,
That if thou once dost lose thy certainty,
Dark doubt will soon envelop all thy thought.

Strader :

Too true ! And 'tis the fear of just this doubt
That causeth me full many an anxious hour.
From my experience I know nought else
Of this strange gift of seership, save that when
Life's vexing problems sorely trouble me,
Then, ghostlike, riseth from dark spirit-depth,
Before my spirit's eyes, some phantom form
Like some dream-being, grim and terrible,
Pressing with fearful weight upon my soul,
And clutching horribly around my heart.
It seems to speak right through me words like these :
' If thou dost fail to gain the victory
O'er me with those blunt weapons of thy thought,
Thou art a fleeting phantom, nothing more,
Formed by thine own deluded imagery.'

Theodosius :

That is the destiny of all such men,
As do approach the world by thought alone.
The spirit's voice dwells deep in every soul.
Nor have we strength to pierce the covering
That spreads itself before our faculties.
Thought doth bring knowledge of things temporal,
Of things that vanish in the course of time :
The everlasting and all spirit-truth
Are found but in the inner depths of man.

Strader :

If, then, the fruitage of a pious faith
Is able to give rest to weary souls,
Such souls may wander safely in that path,

And find sufficiency within themselves.
And yet the power of knowledge, pure and true,
Doth never bloom on such a path as this.

Theodosius :
Yet there can be no other way to light
True spirit-knowledge in the hearts of men.
Pride may seduce and change to fantasies
The soul's true depths of feeling, and may see
A vision only where faith's beauty lies.
One thing alone of all we here have heard
From spirit-teaching of the higher worlds,
Strikes clear upon our honest human sense :
That only in the spirit-world itself
The soul can feel itself in its true home.

The Other Maria :
So long as man feels need of speech alone,
And nought besides, so long such words as these
May satisfy him : but the fuller life
With all its strife, its yearnings after joy,
And all its sorrow, needeth other food
To nourish and sustain the fainting soul.
For me, an inner voice did drive me on
To spend all the remaining days of life
Which were allotted me, in helping those
Whom stress of destiny had smitten down
And plunged in deepest poverty and need.
And far more oft I found it necessary
To soothe the anguish of the soul of man
Than heal his body's pain and suffering.
But I have felt indeed in many ways

My will's weak impotence to comfort men.
So that I am compelled to seek fresh strength
From out the treasured store which floweth forth
Abundantly from spirit-sources here.
The quickening warmth of words which greet my sense,
Flows forth with magic force into my hands ;
And thence, like healing balsam, forth again,
When those hands touch some sorrow-laden soul.
It changeth on my lips to strengthening words
Which carry comfort unto pain-racked hearts.
The source of words like these I do not ask ;
I feel their truth—they give me living life.
And every day more clearly do I see,
That they derive their strength not from my will
In all its weakness, but create anew
Myself each day unto myself again.

Capesius :
Yet surely there are men enough on earth
Who, though they lack such revelation's aid,
Perform innumerable deeds of good ?

Maria :
In sooth there is no lack of men like these
In many places ; but my friend doth mean
A different thing ; and if thou didst but know
The life she led, thou wouldst speak otherwise.
Where unused powers in full abundance dwell
There love will cause the seed to germinate
In rich abundance in the heart's good soil.
But our friend here exhausted life's best powers

In never-ending toil beyond her strength ;
And all her will to live lay crushed and dead
Beneath the cruel weight of destiny,
Which fell upon her. All her strength she gave
To careful guidance of her children's weal :
And low already had her courage ebbed
When early death took her loved husband home.
In such a state as this, days dull and drear
Seemed all fate had in store whilst life remained.
But then the powers of destiny prevailed
To bring her 'neath the spell of spirit-lore ;
And soon with us she felt the vital force
Of life break forth in her a second time.
Fresh aims in life she found, and with them came
Fresh courage once again to fight and strive.
And thus in her the spirit hath achieved
In very truth to fashion from decay
A new and living personality.
And when the spirit in such fruit as this
Shows its creative potency, we learn
Its nature, and the way it speaks to us.
And, if no pride lies hidden in our speech,
And highest moral aims live in our hearts ;
If we believe that in no way at all
Our teaching is our own ;—but that alone
The spirit shows itself within our souls—
Then may we surely venture to assert
That in thy mode of thinking may be found
But feeble shadows waving to and fro
Athwart the real true source of human life :
And that the spirit, which ensouls our work
Is linked in inward harmony with all

That weaves the web of destiny for man
Deep in the very fundaments of life.
I have been privileged for many years
To give myself to vital work in life :
And during all this time more bleeding hearts
And yearning souls have come before mine eyes,
Than many would conceive were possible.
I do esteem thy high ideal flight,—
The proud assurance of thy sciences :
I like to see the student-audience,
Respectful, sit and listen at thy feet :
And that to many souls thy work doth bring
Ennobling clarity of thought, I know.
But yet regarding thought like this, it seems,
Trustworthiness can only dwell therein
So long as thought lives in itself alone.
Whereas the realm of which I am a part
Sends into deep realities of life
The fruitage of its words, since it desires
To plant in deep realities its roots.
Far, far away from all thy thought doth lie
The written word upon the spirit-heaven
Which with momentous tokens doth announce
New growth upon the tree of humankind.
Thought on the old lines clear and sure may seem,
Yet can it only touch the tree's coarse bark,
And never reach the living sap within.

Romanus :

For my part I do seek in vain the bridge
That truly leadeth from ideas to deeds.

Capesius :
'Tis true our friends do over-estimate
The power that can be wielded by ideas,
But thou dost in another way mistake
The actual course of true reality :
For it is certain that ideas must form
The germ of all the actual deeds of men.

Romanus :
If this friend doth so many deeds of good,
The impulse thereunto lies in herself
And her warm-hearted nature, not in thought.
Most certainly 'tis needful for man's soul,
After the busy day of toil and work,
With noble thought to edify the mind.
But yet 'tis only schooling of man's will
In harmony with all his skill and power
To undertake some real work in life
Which will help forward all the human race.
When whirr of busy wheels sounds in mine ears,
Or when I see some creaking windlass drawn
By strong stout hands of men content to work,
Then do I sense indeed the powers of Life.

Germanus :
Often in careless speech have I maintained
That I preferred things droll and humorous
And held these only full of wit and charm,
Deeming that for my brain at any rate,
They always would provide material
Best fitted to fill up the time that lies
Between my recreation and my work.

But now quite tasteless to me seem such things ;
The Power Invisible hath conquered me ;
And I have learned to feel that there may be
More powerful forces in humanity,
Than all our wit's frail castles in the air.

Capesius :
And did it seem that nowhere else but here
'Twas possible to find such spirit-powers ?

Germanus :
Indeed the life I used to live did offer me
Full many a type of spiritual work :
Yet cared I not to pluck or taste its fruit.
But this strange mode of thought which blossoms here
Seems to attract and draw me to itself
However little I desired to come.

Capesius .
Most pleasant hath this hour of converse been,
And we are debtors to our hostess here.
(*Exeunt all, except Maria and Johannes.*)

Johannes :
Oh, stay a little while yet by my side,
I am afraid :—so desperately afraid :—

Maria :
Tell me ; what is it aileth thee, my friend ?

Johannes :
The first cause was our leader's speech ; and then
The chequered converse of these people here.

It all hath moved and stirred me through and through.

Maria :
But how could simple speeches such as these
Seize on thine heart with such intensity ?

Johannes :
Each word seemed in that moment unto me
A dreadful symbol of our nothingness.

Maria :
Indeed it was significant to see
Pour forth in such short time so many kinds
Of life and man's conflicting tendencies,
In all the speeches that we lately heard.
Yet 'tis indeed a most peculiar trait
Of life, as it is lived amongst us here,
To bring to speech the inner mind of man ;
And much that otherwise comes slowly forth,
Stands here revealed in little space of time.

Johannes :
A mirrored picture 'twas of fullest life
That showed me to myself in clearest lines :
This spirit-revelation makes me feel
That most of us protect and train one trait
And one alone in all our character,
Which thus persuades itself it is the whole.
I sought to unify these many traits
In mine own self and boldly trod the path
Which here is shown, to lead unto that goal ;

And it hath made of me a nothingness.
Keenly I feel what all these others lack,
And yet I sense as keenly that they all
Have actual part in life itself, whilst I
Stand but on unsubstantial nothingness.
It seemed whole lines of life ran into one
Significant in those brief speeches here.
But then mine own life's portrait also rose
And stood forth vividly within my soul.
The days of childhood first were painted there,
With all its fullness and its joy in life :
Then came the picture of my youthful prime
With that proud hopefulness in parent-hearts
Awakened by the talents of their son.
Then dreams concerning my career in art,
Which formed life's all in those old happy days,
Surged up from out my spirit's inmost depths
Exhorting to fulfil my cherished hopes ;
And then those dreams in which thyself didst see
How I translated into coloured form
The spirit-life that liveth in thy soul.

Then saw I tongues of fire spring up and lick
Around my youthful dreams and artist hopes,
Reducing all to dust and nothingness.
Thereafter rose another pictured form
From out that drear and dreadful nothingness—
A human form, which once had linked its fate
In faithful love with mine in days long past.
She sought to hold me by her when I turned
Long years ago unto my home again,
Called to attend my mother's funeral rites.

I heeded not, but tore myself away ;
For mighty was the power that drew me here
To this thy circle and the goals of life
Which here are set before our eager gaze.
In those dark days I felt no sense of guilt
When I did rend in twain the bond of love,
That was unto another soul its life.
Nor later when the message came to me
How that her life did slowly pine away,
And finally was altogether quenched
Did I feel aught of guilt until to-day ;
But full of meaning were those recent words
In yonder chamber which our leader spake ;
How that we may destroy by power misused
And perverse thought the destiny of those
Whom bonds of loving trust link to our souls.
Ah, hideously these words again resound
Out of the picture, thence re-echoing
With ghastly repetition from all sides :
' Her murderer thou art ! her hast thou slain ! '
Thus whilst this weighty speech hath been for all
The motive to probe deep within themselves,
Within my heart it hath brought forth alone
The consciousness of this most grievous guilt.
By this new means of sight I can perceive
How far astray my striving footsteps erred.

Maria :
And at this moment, friend, in dark domains
Thou walkest, and none else can help thee there,
Save he, in whom we all do put out trust.
(*Maria is called away ; re-enter Helena.*)

Helena :
I feel constrained to linger by thy side
A little while ; since now for many weeks
Thy gaze hath held so much of grief and care.
How can the light, which streams so radiantly
Bring gloom unto thy soul, which only strives
With utmost strength to seek and know the truth ?

Johannes :
Hath then this light brought naught but joy to thee ?

Helena :
Not the same joy as that which once I knew,
But that new joy which springeth from those words,
Through which the spirit doth reveal itself.

Johannes :
Natheless I tell thee that the self-same power,
Which doth in thee create, can also crush.

Helena :
Some error must have crept into thy soul
With cunning tread, if this be possible ;
And if dull care instead of happiness,
And moods of sorrow flow forth from the source
Of truth itself instead of spirit-bliss
In free abundance : seek then in thyself
The stumbling-blocks that thus impede thy way.
How often are we told that only health
Is the true fruitage of our teaching here,
Which makes to blossom forth the powers of life.
Shall it then show the contrary in thee ?

I see its fruitage in so many lives,
Which gather trustingly around me here.
Their former mode of life grows day by day
Strange and still stranger to such souls as these ;
As well-springs are fresh opened in their hearts,
Thenceforth renewing life within themselves.
To gaze into the primal depths of being
Doth not create those passionate desires
Which torture and torment the souls of men.

(*Exit.*)

Johannes :

It took me many years to understand
And know the vanity of things of sense
When spirit-knowledge is not joined with them
In close and intimate companionship.
But that the words of highest wisdom's light
Uttered by thee, are empty vanity
One single moment hath sufficed to prove.

Curtain

Scene 2

Landscape: rocks and springs. The entire scene is to be thought of as taking place in the soul of Johannes Thomasius. What follows is the content of his meditation.

(*There sounds from the springs and rocks:*)
Know thou thyself, O man.

Johannes:
'Tis thus I hear them, now these many years,
These words of weighty import all around.
I hear them in the wind and in the wave:
Out from earth's depths do they resound to me:
And as a tiny acorn's mystery,
Confines the structure of a mighty oak,
So in the kernel of these words there lies,
All elemental nature; all I grasp
Of soul, of spirit, time, eternity.
It seems mine own peculiarities
And all the world besides live in these words:
'Know thou thyself, O man. Know thou thyself.'

(*From the springs and rocks resounds:*)
Know thou thyself, O man.

Johannes :

And now—I feel
Mine inmost being terrified to life :
Without the gloom of night doth weave me round,
And deep within my soul thick darkness yawns :
And sounding from this universal gloom
And up from out the darkness of my soul
These words ring forth : ' Know thou thyself, O man.'

(*From the springs and rocks resounds :*)

Know thou thyself, O man.

Johannes :

It robs me of my very self : I change
Each hour of day, and am transformed by night.
The earth I follow on its cosmic course :
I seem to rumble in the thunder's peal,
And flash adown the lightning's fierce-forked tongue—
I AM.—Alas, already do I feel
Mine own existence snatched away from me.
I see what was my former carnal shape,
As some strange being, quite outside myself,
And infinitely far away from me.
But now another body hovers near,
And through its mouth I am compelled to speak :—
' Ah, bitter sorrow hath he brought to me ;
So utterly I trusted him of old.
He left me lonely with my sorrow's pain,
He robbed me of the very warmth of life,
And thrust me deep beneath the chill, cold ground.'
Poor soul, 'tis she I left, and leaving her
It was in truth mine own self that I left ;

And I must suffer all her pain and woe.
For knowledge hath endowed me with the power
Myself into another's self to fuse.
Ah me! Ye quench again by your own power
The light of inner knowledge ye have brought,
Ye cruel words, ' Know thou thyself, O man.'

(From the springs and rocks resounds:)

Know thou thyself, O man.

Johannes:

Ye lead me back again within the sphere
Of mine own being's former fantasies.
Yet in what shape know I myself again!
My human form is lost and gone from me;
Like some fierce dragon do I see myself;
Begotten out of primal lust and greed.
And clearly do I see how up till now
Some dim deluding veil of phantom forms
Hath hid from me mine own monstrosity.
Mine own self's fierceness must devour my Self.
And through my veins run like consuming fire
Those words, that once with elemental force
Revealed the core of suns and earths to me.
They throb within my pulse, beat in mine heart;
And even in mine inmost thoughts I feel
Strange worlds e'en now blaze forth like passions fierce.
They are the fruitage of these very words:
' Know thou thyself, O man. Know thou thyself.'

(From the springs and rocks resounds:)

Know thou thyself, O man.

Johannes :
There,—from that dark abyss, what creature glares ?
I feel the chains that hold me chained to thee.
So fast was not Prometheus rivetted
Upon the naked rocks of Caucasus,
As I am rivetted and forged to thee—
Who art thou, fearful, execrable shape ?

(*From the springs and rocks resounds :*)

Know thou thyself, O man.

Johannes :
Oh yea, I know thee ; for thou art myself :
Knowledge doth chain to thee, pernicious beast,

(*Enter Maria unnoticed by Johannes.*)

Chain mine own self—pernicious beast—to thee.
I willed to flee from thee ; but I was blind,
Blinded by glamour of the worlds, whereto
My folly fled to free me from myself ;
And now once more within my sightless soul
Blind through these words : ' Know thou thyself, O man.'

(*From the springs and rocks resounds :*)

Know thou thyself, O man.

Johannes : (*As though coming to himself, sees Maria. The meditation passes to the plane of inner reality.*)

Thou here, my friend ?

Maria :
I sought thee, friend, although I know full well
How comforting to thee is solitude,

When many varying thoughts of many men
Have flooded o'er thy soul. I also know
I cannot by my presence help my friend
In this dark hour of strife—yet yearnings vague
Drive me in this same moment unto thee ;
When Benedictus' words, instead of light,
Such grievous sorrow drew from thy soul's depths.

Johannes :
How comforting to me is solitude !

Yea, I have sought to find myself therein,
So often when to labyrinths of thought
The joys and griefs of men had driven me.
But now, O friend, that, too, is past and gone.
What Benedictus' words at first aroused
Within my soul, and all that I lived through
When listening to the speeches of those men,
Seems but indeed a little thing, when I
Compare therewith the storm that solitude
With sullen brooding hath brought forth in me.
Ah me ! when I recall this solitude !
It hounded me into the voids of space,
And tore me from my very self in twain,
Within that soul to whom I brought such grief
I rose, as though I were that other self.
And there I had to suffer all the pain
Of which I was myself the primal cause.
Ah cruel, sombre, fearful solitude
Thou giv'st me back unto myself indeed,
Yet but to terrify me with the sight
Of mine own nature's fathomless abyss.

Man's final refuge hath been lost to me :
I have been robbed of solitude.

Maria :

I must repeat what I have said before.
Alone can Benedictus succour thee ;
Only from him may we obtain support
And that firm basis which we both do lack.
For know thou this : I also can no more
Endure the riddle of my life, unless
His gentle guidance solveth it for me.
Full often have I kept before mine eyes
This truth sublime, that o'er all life doth float
Appearance and deception if we grasp
Life's surface only in our moods of thought.
And o'er and o'er again it spake to me :
Thou must take knowledge how illusion's veil
Weaves all around thee ; and however oft
It may appear to thee as truth, beware ;
For evil fruitage may in truth arise
If thou shouldst try within another's soul
To wake the light that lives within thyself.
Yet in the best part of my soul I know
That even this oppressive weight of care
Which hath o'erwhelmed thy soul, dear friend of mine,
As thou didst tread with me the path of life,
Is part and parcel of the thorny way,
That leads unto the light of Truth itself.
Thou must live through each horror and alarm
That can spring forth from vain imagining
Before the Truth in essence stands revealed.
Thus speaks thy star ; and by that same star's speech

It doth appear to me that we shall walk
One day united, on the spirit-paths.
And yet whene'er I seek to tread these paths
Black night doth spread a curtain round my sight.
And many things I am compelled to see,
Springing as fruitage from my character,
Intensify the darkness of that night.
We two must seek clear vision in that light,
Which, though it vanish for a while from sight,
Can never be extinguished in the soul.

Johannes:
But then, Maria, dost thou realize
Through what my soul hath fought its way but now?
A grievous destiny is thine, dear friend,
Full well I know. And yet how far remote
From thy pure nature is the avenging force,
That hath so wholly shattered mine own soul.
Thou canst ascend the clearest heights of truth,
And scan with steadfast gaze life's tangled path;
And whether in the darkness or the light
Thou wilt retain thine own identity.
But me each moment may deprive of Self.
Deep down I had to dive within the hearts
Of those who late revealed themselves in speech.
I followed one to cloistered solitude,—
And in another's soul I listened to
Felicia's fairy lore. I was each one;
Only unto myself I seemed as dead;
For I must fain believe that primal life
Did spring from very Nothingness itself,
If it were right to entertain the hope,

That out of that dread nothingness in me
A human being ever could arise.
For I am driven from fear into the dark
And from the darkness back again to fear
By wisdom stored within these living words:
' Know thou thyself, O man. Know thou thyself.'

(*From the springs and rocks the words resound:*)

Know thou thyself, O man.

Curtain

Scene 3

A room for meditation. The background is a great purple curtain. The scene is purple in colour with a large yellow pentagonal lamp suspended from the ceiling. No other furniture or ornaments are in the room except the lamp and one chair. Benedictus, Johannes, Maria, and a child.

Maria :
I bring to thee this child who needs some word
From out thy mouth.

Benedictus :
My child, henceforth each eve
Thou shalt come unto me to hear the word
That shall fill full thy soul ere thou dost tread
The realm of souls in sleep. Wilt thou do this ?

Child :
Most gladly will I come.

Benedictus :
This very eve
Fill thy soul full ere sleep embraceth thee,

With strength from these few words: 'The powers of light
Bear me aloft unto the spirit's home.'

(*Maria, having taken the child away, returns.*)

Maria:

And now, that this child's destiny doth flow
Harmoniously through future days beneath
The shadow of thy gracious fatherhood,
I too may claim my leader's kind advice,
Who am its mother, not by bond of blood
But through the mighty power of destiny.
For thou hast shown to me the way wherein
I had to guide its footsteps from that day,
When I discovered it before my door
Left by its unknown mother desolate.
And wonder-working proved themselves those rules
Whereby thou madest me train my foster-child.
All powers, that deep in body and in soul
Lay hidden, issued forth to light and life:
Clear proof it was that all thy counselling
Sprang from the realm which sheltered this child's soul
Before it built its body's covering.
We saw its early promise blossom forth
And radiate more brightly each new day;
Thou dost know well how hard it was for me
To gain the child's affection, at the first.
It grew up 'neath my care, and yet nought else
Save habit chained its soul at first to mine.
It only realized and felt that I
Gave it the nurture and the food that served
The needs of body and the growth of soul.
Then came the time when in the child-like heart

There dawned the love for her who fostered it.
An outer incident brought forth this change—
The visit of the seeress to our group.
Gladly the child did go about with her
And soon did learn full many a beauteous word
Steeped in the mystic charm that graced her speech.
Then came the moment when her ecstasy
Descended on our friend with magic power.
The child could see her eyes, strange smouldering light,
And, terrified unto the vital core,
The young soul found itself.

In her dismay she fled unto mine arms ;
And from that hour did grow her love for me.
Since that same time she doth accept from me
The gifts of life with her full consciousness
Not with blind instinct : aye, and since that day
When this young heart first quivered into warmth,
Whene'er her gaze met mine with loving glance,
Thy wisdom's treasures of their fruitage failed,
And much already ripe hath withered up.
I saw appear in her those tokens strange
That proved so terrible unto my friend.

A dark enigma am I to myself,
And grow still darker. Thou wilt not deny
To solve for me life's fearful questionings !
Why do I mar the life of friend and child,
When I in love attempt to work on them
According to the dictates of my heart
By spirit-lore instructed and inspired ?
Oft hast thou taught me this exalted truth—

' Illusion's veil o'erspreads life's surfaces '—
Yet must I see with greater clarity
Why I must bear this heavy destiny,
That seems so cruel and that works such harm.

Benedictus :
Within our circle there is formed a knot
Of threads that Karma spins world-fashioning.
Thy sufferings, my friend, are links in chains,
Forged by the hand of destiny, whereby
The deeds of Gods unite with human lives.—

When in life's pilgrimage I had attained
That rank which granted me the dignity
To serve with counsel in the spirit-spheres,
A godlike Being did draw nigh to me,
Who would descend into the realms of earth,
And dwell there, veiled in form of flesh, as man.
For just at this one turning-point of time
The Karma of mankind made this demand.
For each great step in world-development
Is only possible when Gods do stoop
To link themselves with human destiny.
And this new spirit-sight that needs must grow
And germinate henceforth in souls of men
Can only be unfolded when a God
Doth plant the seed within some human heart.
My task it was to find that human soul
Which worthy seemed to take within itself
The powerful Seed of God. I had to join
The deed of heaven to some human lot.
My spirit's eye then sought, and fell on thee.

Thy course of life had fitted thee to be
The mediator in salvation's work.
Through many former lives thou hadst acquired
Receptiveness for all the greatest things
That human hearts can e'er experience.
Within thy tender soul thou didst bring forth,
As spirit heritage, the noble gift
Of beauty, joined to virtue's loftiest claim :
And that which thine eternal Self had formed
And brought to being through thy birth on earth
Did reach ripe fruitage when thy years were few.—
Thou didst not scale steep spirit-heights too soon,
Nor grew thy yearning for the spirit-land
Before thou hadst the full enjoyment known
Of harmless pleasures in the world of sense.
Anger and love thy soul did learn to know
When thy thoughts dwelt yet far from spirit-life.
Nature in all her beauty to enjoy,
And pluck the fruits of art,—these didst thou strive
To make thy life's sole content and its wealth.
Merry thy laughter, as a child can laugh
Who hath not known as yet life's shadowed fears.
Thus thou didst learn to understand life's joy,
And mourn in sadness, each in its own time,
Before thy dawning conscience grew to seek
Of sorrow and of happiness the cause.
A ripened fruit of many lives that soul,
That enters earth's domains, and shows such moods.
Its childlike nature is the blossoming
And not the ground-root of its character.
And such a soul alone was I to choose
As mediator for the God, who sought

The power to work within our human world.
And now thou learnest that thy nature must
Transform itself into its opposite,
When it flows forth to other human souls.
The spirit in thee ripens whatsoe'er
In human nature can attain the realm
Of vast eternity ; and much it slays
That is but part of transitory realms.
And yet the sacrifices of such deaths
Are but the seeds of immortality ;
All that which blossoms forth from death below
Must grow unto the higher life above.

Maria :

E'en so it is with me. Thou giv'st me light :
But light that doth deprive me of my sight,
And sunder me from mine own self in twain.
Then do I seem some spirit's instrument—
No longer master of myself. No more
Do I endure that erstwhile form of mine
Which only is a mask and not the truth.

Johannes :

O friend, what ails thee ? Vanished is the light
That filled thine eye : as marble is thy frame.
I grasp thine hand and find it cold as death.

Benedictus :

My son, full many trials have come to thee ;
And now thou stand'st before life's hardest test.
Thou seest the carnal covering of thy friend ;
But her true self doth float in spirit-spheres
Before mine eyes.

Johannes :

See ! Her lips move ; she speaks.

Maria :

Thou gav'st me clearness ; yet this clearness throws
A veil of darkness round on every side.
I curse thy clearness ; and I curse thee too,
Who didst make tool of me for weird wild arts
Whereby thou willedst to deceive mankind.
No doubt at any moment hitherto
Had crossed my mind of heights thy spirit reached ;
But now one single moment doth suffice
To tear all faith in thee from out my heart.
Those spirit-beings thou art subject to,
I now must recognize as hellish fiends.
Others I had to mislead and deceive
Because at first I was deceived by thee.—
But I will flee unto dim distances,
Where not a sound of thee shall reach mine ears ;
Yet near enough that thy soul may be reached
By bitter curses framed by these my lips.
For thou didst rob my blood of all its fire,
That thou mightst sacrifice to thy false god
That which was rightly mine and mine alone.
But now this same blood's fire shall thee consume.
Thou madest me trust in vain imaginings ;
And that this might be so, thou first didst make
A pictured falsehood of my very self.
Often had I to mark how from my soul
Each deed and thought turned to its opposite ;
So now doth turn what once was love for thee,
Into the fire of wild and bitter hate.

Through all worlds will I seek to find that fire
Which can consume thee—I curse—Ah, woe!

Johannes:
Who speaketh here? I do not see my friend.
I hear instead some gruesome being speak.

Benedictus:
Thy friend's soul hovers in the heights above.
Only her mortal image hath she left
Here with us: and where'er a human form
Is found bereft of soul, there is the room
Sought by the enemy, the foe of good,
To enter into realms perceptible,
And find some carnal form through which to speak.
Just such an adversary spake e'en now,
Who would destroy the work imposed on me
For thee, my son, and millions yet unborn.
Were I to deem these wild anathemas,
Which our friend's shell did utter here and now,
Aught else but some grim tempter's cunning skill,
Thou durst not follow more my leadership.
The enemy of Good stood by my side,
And thou hast seen into the darkness plunged
All that is temporal of that dear form,
For whom, my son, thy whole love burns and glows.
Since through her mouth spirits spake oft to thee,
The Karma of the world could not restrain
Hell's princes also speaking thus through her.
Now only mayst thou seek her very soul
And learn her nature's inmost verity;
For she shall form for thee the prototype

Of that new higher life of humankind
To which thou dost aspire to raise thyself.
Her soul hath soared aloft to spirit-heights,
Where every man may find his being's source
Which springs to life and fullness in himself.
Thou too shalt follow her to spirit-realms,
And see her in the Temple of the Sun.—
Within this circle there is formed a knot
Of threads which Karma spins, world fashioning.
My son, since thou hast now attained thus far,
Thou shalt still further pierce beyond the veil.
I see thy star in fullest splendour shine.
There is no place within the realm of sense
For strife, such as men wage when they do strive
And struggle after consecration's gift.
Whate'er the outer world of sense begets
Of riddles soluble by intellect,
Whate'er this world engenders in man's heart
Born tho' it be of love or bitter hate
And howsoever direful its results:
The spirit-seeker must attain the power
In all these things to stand unmoved, serene,
Casting his gaze all unperturbed and calm
Upon the scene where such contentions rage.
For him must other powers unfold themselves
Which are not found upon this field of strife.
So didst thou need to fight to prove thy soul
In combat such as comes to him alone,
Who finds himself accoutred for such powers
As do belong unto the spirit-worlds.
And had these powers found thee not ripe enough
To tread the path of knowledge, they needs must

Have maimed thy powers of feeling, ere thou daredst
To know all that which now is known to thee.
The Beings, who can gaze into world-depths,
Lead on those men, who would attain the heights,
First to that summit whence it may be shown
Whether there lies in them the power to reach
To conscious sight within the spirit-realms.
And those in whom such powers are found to lie
Are straightway from the world of sense set free.
The others all must wait their season due.
But thou, thou hast preserved thy Self, my son,
When Powers on high stirred to its depths thy soul,
And potent spirits shrouded thee with fear.
Right powerfully thy Self hath fought its way
E'en though thy very heart was torn by doubts,
That willed to thrust thee into darksome depths.
True pupil of my teaching hast thou been,
First since that hour, so fraught with fate for thee,
When thou didst learn to doubt thy very self,
And gavest up thyself as wholly lost,
But yet the strength within thee held thee fast.
Then might I give thee of my treasured store
Of wisdom, whence to draw the strength to stand
Assured, e'en when mistrusting thine own self.
Such was the wisdom which thou didst attain
More steadfast than the faith once given to thee.
Ripe wast thou found, and thou may'st be set free.
Thy friend hath gone before and waits for thee
In spirit-worlds, and thou shalt find her there.
I can but add this guidance for thee now:
Kindle the full power of thy soul with words
Which through my lips shall grant to thee the key

To spirit-heights, and they will lead thee on
When naught else leads, that eyes of sense can see.
Receive them in the fulness of thy heart:
' The weaving essence of the light streams forth
Through depths of space to fill the world with life;
Love's grace doth warm the centuries of time
To call forth revelation of all worlds.
And spirit-messengers come forth to wed
The weaving essence of creative light
With revelation of the souls of men:
And that man, who can wed to both of these
His very Self, he lives in spirit-heights.'
O spirits, who are visible to man,
Quicken with life the soul of this our son:
From inmost depths may there stream forth for him
That which can fill his soul with spirit-light.
From inmost depths may there resound for him
That which can wholly wake in him his Self
To the creative joy of spirit-life.

A Spirit-Voice behind the stage:
To founts of worlds primeval
His surging thoughts do mount;—
What as shadow he hath thought
What as fancy he hath lived
Soars up beyond the world of form and shape;
On whose fulness pondering
Mankind in shadow dreams,
O'er whose fulness gazing forth
Mankind in fancy lives.

Curtain

Scene 4

A landscape which seeks to express the world of souls by its characteristic peculiarities.

Enter Lucifer and Ahriman. Johannes is seen at the right of the stage in deep meditation. What follows is experienced by him in meditation.

Lucifer :

O man, know thou thyself ; O man, feel me.
From spirit guidance, thou hast freed thyself,
And into earth's free realms thou hast escaped.
Midst earth's confusion thou didst seek to prove
Thine own existence ; and to find thyself
Was thy reward, and was thy destiny.
Me didst thou find : for spirits willed
To cast a veil before the eyes of sense ;
Which veil I rent in twain. Those spirits willed
To follow out their will alone in thee ;
But I gave thee self-will and foiled their aim.
O man, know thou thyself ; O man, feel me.

Ahriman :

O man, know me ; O man, feel thou thyself.
Thou hast escaped from darkened spirit-realms
And thou hast found again the earth's pure light,
So now from my sure ground drink strength and truth.

I make earth hard and fast. The spirits willed
To snatch away from thee the charm of sense ;
Which charm I weave for thee in light condensed.
I lead thee unto true reality.
O man, know me ; O man, feel thou thyself.

Lucifer :
Time was not when thou didst not live through me.
I followed thee throughout the course of life,
And was permitted to bestow on thee
Strong personal traits and joy in thine own self.

Ahriman :
Time was not when thou didst not me behold.
Thy mortal eyes saw me in all earth's growth ;
I was permitted to shine forth for thee
In beauty proud and revelation's bliss.

(*Exit with Lucifer.*)

Johannes (to himself in meditation) :
This is the sign as Benedictus told.
Before the world of souls stand these two powers :
The one, as Tempter, lives within the soul ;
The other doth obscure the sight of man
When he directeth it to outward things.
The one took on the woman's form e'en now,
To bring the soul's illusions 'neath my gaze ;
The other may be found in everything.

(*Enter the Spirit of the Elements with Capesius and Strader, whom he has brought to the earth's surface from the earth's depths. They are conceived as souls looking out upon the earth's*

surface. The Spirit of the Elements is aged and stands erect upon a sphere. Capesius and Strader are in astral garb ; the former, though the older man of the two in years, here appears the younger. He wears blue robes of various shades, Strader wears brown and yellow.)

Spirit :
So have ye reached the spot ye longed to find.
It proved indeed a heavy care to me,
To grant your wish. Spirits and elements
Did rage in mad wild storm when their domain
I had to enter with your essences.
Your minds opposed the ruling of my powers.

Capesius :
Mysterious Being, who art thou, who hast
Brought me to this fair realm through spirit-spheres ?

Spirit :
The soul of man may only look on me,
Whene'er the service which I render him
Hath been achieved. Yet he obeys my powers
Through all the moving sequences of time.

Capesius :
It matters little to me to enquire
What spirit led me hither to this place.
I feel life's powers revive in this new land,
Whose light doth seem to widen mine own breast ;
In my pulse-beat I feel the whole world's might ;
And premonitions of exalted deeds
Thrill in my heart. I will translate in words

The revelation of this beauteous realm,
That hath refreshed me in such wondrous wise ;
And souls of men shall bloom, as choicest flowers
If I can pour into their life on earth
The inspiration flowing from these founts.

(*Lightning and thunder from the depths and heights.*)

Strader :

Why quake the depths, and why resound the heights
When hope's young dreams surge upward in the soul ?

(*Lightning and thunder.*)

Spirit :

To human dreamers words of hope like these
Sound proud indeed ; but in the depths of earth
The vain illusions of mistaken thought
Awake such thunderous echoes evermore.
Ye mortals hear them only at those times
When ye draw nigh to my domain. Ye think
To build exalted temples unto Truth,
And yet your work's effects do but unchain
Storm-spirits in primeval depths of earth.
Nay more, the spirits must destroy whole worlds,
That deeds ye do in realms where time hath sway
May not cause devastation and cold death
Through all the ages of eternity.

Strader :

So these eternal ages must regard
As empty fantasy what seems the truth
To man's best observation and research.

(*Lightning and thunder.*)

Spirit :
An empty fantasy, so long as sense
Doth only search in realms to spirit strange.

Strader :
Thou may'st well call a dreamer that friend's soul
Which in the joy of youth its goal doth set
With such a noble strength and high desire ;
But in mine aged heart thy words fall dead
Despite their summoned aid of thunderous storms.
I tore myself from cloistered quietude
To proud achievement in my search for truth.
In life's storm-centres many a year I stood,
And men had confidence in me, and what
I taught them through my deep strong sense for truth.
(*Lightning and thunder.*)

Spirit :
'Tis fitting for thee to confess that none
Can tell whence stream the fountains of our thought,
Nor where the fundaments of Being lie.

Strader :
Oh this same speech, which in youth's hopeful days
So oft with chill persistence pierced my soul
When thought-foundations quaked, which once seemed
firm !
(*Lightning and thunder.*)

Spirit :
If thou dost fail to gain the victory
O'er me with those blunt weapons of thy thought

Thou art a fleeting phantom, nothing more,
Formed by thine own deluded imagery.

Strader :
So soon again such gruesome speech from thee !
This too I heard before in mine own soul,
When once a seeress threateningly did wish
To wreck the firm foundations of my thought
And make me feel the sharp dread sting of doubt.
But that is past, and I defy thy might,
Thou aged rogue, so cunningly concealed
Beneath a mask devised by thine own self
To counterfeit the form of nature's lord.
Reason will overthrow thee, otherwise
Than thou dost think, when once she is enthroned
Upon the proud heights of the mind of man.
As mistress will she reign assuredly
Not as some handmaiden in nature's realm.
(*Lightning and thunder.*)

Spirit :
The world is ordered so, that every act
Requires a like reaction : unto you
I gave the self ; ye owe me my reward.

Capesius :
I will myself create from mine own soul
The spirit counterpart of things of sense.
And when at length all nature stands transformed,
Idealized through man's creative work,
Her mirrored form shall be reward enough ;
And then if thou dost feel thyself akin
To that great mother of all worlds, and spring'st

From depths where world-creating forces reign,
Then let my will, which lives in head and breast,
Inspiring me to aim at highest goals,
Be thy reward for deeds commanded.
Thy help hath raised me from dull sentiment
To thought's proud heights... Let this be thy reward!

(*Lightning and thunder.*)

Spirit:

Ye well can see, how little your bold words
Bear weight in my domain: they do but loose
The storm, and rouse the elements to wrath,
As adversaries of the ordered world.

Capesius:

Take then thine own reward where't may be found.
The impulse that doth drive the souls of men
To seek true spirit-heights within themselves
Set their own measure, their own order make.
Creation were not possible for man
If others wished to claim what he had made.
The song that trills from out the linnet's throat
Sufficeth for itself; and so doth man
Find his reward, when in his fashioning work
He doth experience creative joy.

(*Lightning and thunder.*)

Spirit:

It is not meet to grudge me my reward.
If ye yourselves cannot repay the debt
Then tell the woman, who endowed your souls
With power, that she must pay instead of you.

(*Exit.*)

Capesius :
He hath departed. Whither turn we now ?
To find our way aright in these new worlds
Must be, it seems, the first care of our minds.

Strader :
To follow confidently the best way,
That we can find, with sure but cautious tread,
Methinks should lead us straightway to the goal.

Capesius :
Rather should we be silent as to goal.
That we shall find if we courageously
Obey the impulse of our inner self,
Which speaks thus to me : ' Let Truth be thy guide ;
May it unfold strong powers within thyself
And mould them with the noblest fashioning
In all that thou shalt do ; then must thy steps
Attain their destined goal, nor go astray.'

Strader :
Yet from the outset it were best our steps
Should not lack consciousness of their true goal,
If we would be of service unto men
And give them happiness. He, who would serve
Himself alone, doth follow his own heart ;
But he, who wills to serve his neighbour best,
Must surely know his life's necessities.

(*The Other Maria, also in soul-form, emerges from the rocks, covered with precious stones.*)

But see ! What wondrous being's this ? It seems

As though the rock itself did give it birth.
From what world-depths do such strange forms arise?

The Other Maria:
I wrest my way through solid rock, and fain
Would clothe in human speech its very will;
I sense earth's essence and with human brains
I fain would think the thoughts of Earth herself.
I breathe pure air of life, and I transmute
Beings of air into the feeling flow
That surging swells within the breast of man.

Strader:
Then thou canst not assist us in our quest.
For far aloft from men's endeavour stands
All that must abide in nature's realm.

Capesius:
Lady, I like thy words, and I would fain
Translate thy form of speech into mine own.

The Other Maria:
Most strange doth seem to me your proud discourse.
For, when ye speak yourselves, unto mine ear
Your words do sound incomprehensible.
But if I let them echo in my heart
And issue in new form, they spread abroad
O'er all that lives in mine environment
And solve for me its hidden mystery.

Capesius:
If this, thy speech, be true, then change for us
Into thy speech, that nature may respond,

The question of the true worth of man's life.
For we ourselves lack power to question thus
Great mother nature that we may be heard.

The Other Maria:
In me ye only see an humble maid
Of that high spirit-being, which doth dwell
In that domain whence ye have just now come.
There hath been given me this field of work
That here in lowliness I may show forth
Her mirrored image unto mortal sense.

Capesius:
So then we have just fled from that domain
Wherein our longing could have been assuaged ?

The Other Maria:
And if ye do not find again the way,
Your efforts shall be fruitless evermore.

Capesius:
Then tell which way will lead us back again.

The Other Maria:
There are two ways. If my power doth attain
To its full height all creatures of my realm
Shall glow in beauty's most resplendent dress.
From rocks and water, glittering light shall stream,
And colours in their richest fulness flash
On all around, whilst life in merry mood
Shall fill the air with joyous harmony.
And if your souls do then but steep themselves

In mine own being's purest ecstasy
On spirit pinions shall ye wing your way
Unto primeval origins of worlds.

Strader :
That is no way for us ; for in our speech
We name such talk mere fancy, and we fain
Would seek firm ground, not fly to cloud-capped heights.

The Other Maria :
Then if ye wish to tread the other path
Ye must forthwith renounce your spirit's pride.
Ye must forget what reason doth command,
And let the touch of nature conquer you.
In your men's breasts let your child-soul have sway,
Artless and undisturbed by thought's dim shades.
So will ye surely reach Life's fountain-head,
Although unconscious of the way ye go.

(*Exit.*)

Capesius :
Thus are we thrown back on ourselves alone,
And have but learned that it behoveth us
To work and wait in patience for the fruit
That future days shall ripen from our work.

Johannes (*speaking, as it were, from his meditation. Here and in the following scene he sits aside and takes no part in the action*) *:*
So do I find within the soul's domain
Those men who are already known to me :
First he who told us of Felicia's tales,

Though here I saw him in his youthful prime;
And also he who in his younger days
Had chosen for his life monastic rule,
As some old man did he appear: with them
There stood the Spirit of the Elements.

Curtain

Scene 5

A subterranean rock-temple : a hidden site of the Mysteries of the Hierophants.

At the right of the stage, Johannes is seen in deep meditation.

Benedictus (in the East) :

Ye, who have been companions unto me
In the domain of everlasting life,
Here in your midst I stand to-day to ask
The help of which I stand in need from you
To weave the thread of destiny for one,
Who from our midst must now receive the light.
Through bitter trials and sorrows hath he passed,
And hath in deepest agony of soul
Prepared the way to consecrate his life
And thus attain to knowledge of the truth.
Accomplished now the task assigned to me,
As spirit-messenger, to bring to men
The treasured wisdom of this temple's shrine.
And now, ye brethren, 'tis your sacred task
To bring my work to full accomplishment.
I showed to him the light that proved the guide
To his first vision of the spirit-world,
But that this vision may be turned to truth
Your work must needs be added unto mine.

My words proceed from mine own mouth alone,
But through your lips world-spirits do sound forth.

Theodosius (*in the South*) :
Thus speaks the power of love, which bindeth worlds
And filleth beings with the breath of life :—
Let warmth flow in his heart that he may grasp
How by the sacrificing of that vain
Illusion of his personality
He doth draw near the spirit of the world.
His sight from sleep of sense thou hast set free ;
Love's warmth will wake the spirit in his soul ;
His Self from carnal covering thou hast drawn ;
And love itself will crystallize his soul
That it may be a mirror to reflect
All that doth happen in the spirit-world.
Love too will give him strength to feel himself
A spirit, and will fashion thus his ear
That it can hear and know the spirit-speech.

Romanus (*in the West*) :
Nor are my words the revelation
Of mine own self. Through me the world-will speaks.
And since thou hast thus raised unto the power
To live in spirit-realms the man to thee
Entrusted, now this power shall lead him forth
Beyond the bounds of space and ends of time.
To those realms shall he pass wherein do work
Creative spirits, who shall there reveal
Themselves to him ; demanding from him deeds ;
And willingly will he perform their work.
The purposes of those who mould the worlds

Shall fill his soul with life ; there too the earth's
Primeval sources shall enspirit him ;
World potencies shall there empower him ;
The mights of spheres shall there enlighten him,
And rulers of the worlds fill him with fire.

Retardus (in the North) :
From the foundation of the world ye have
Been forced to suffer me within your midst.
So must ye also to my words give ear
In your deliberations here to-day.
Some little time must surely yet elapse
Before ye can fulfil and bring to pass
What ye have set forth in such beauteous words.
No sign as yet hath come to us from earth
That she doth long for new initiates.
So long as this spot, where we council hold,
Hath not been trodden by the feet of those
Who, uninitiated, yet have power
The spirits to release from things of sense,
So long the task is mine to check your zeal.
First must they bring us message that the earth
Doth seem in need of revelations new.
For this cause hold I back your spirit-light
Within this temple, lest it may bring harm
Instead of health to souls that are not ripe.
Out of myself I give to man on earth
That faculty which lets the truths of sense
Appear to him the highest, just so long
As spirit wisdom would but blind his eyes.
Therefore let simple faith be still his guide
In matters of the spirit : let his will

Its hidden inspiration still receive
From dim desires which feel their way through life.

Romanus :
From the foundation of the world we have
Been forced to suffer thee within our midst.
But now at length the time hath run its course
That was allotted to such work as thine.
The world-will in me feels that they approach—

(*Felix Balde appears in his earthly shape : the Other Maria as a soul-form from out of the rock.*)

—Who, unitiated, can release
The spirit from the outward show of sense.
No more 'tis granted thee to check our steps.
They near our temple of their own free will
And bring to thee this message, that they wish
To help our spirit labours, joined with us.
They found themselves till now not yet prepared
For union, since they clung to the belief
That seership must stand from intellect aloof.
Now have they learned whither mankind is led
By reason, which, when severed from true sight,
Doth err and wander in the depths of worlds.
They now will speak to thee of fruits which needs
Must ripen through thy power in human souls.

Retardus :
Ye, who unconsciously have forwarded
My work till now, ye shall still further help—
If ye will distant keep from all that doth
Belong unto my realm and that alone ;

Then shall ye surely find a place reserved
For you to work as hitherto ye worked.

Felix Balde :
A power, which speaks from very depths of earth
Unto my spirit, hath commanded me
To come unto this consecrated place ;
Since it desires to speak to you through me
Of all its bitter sorrow and its need.

Benedictus :
My friend, then tell us now how thou hast learned
The woe of world-depths in thine own soul's core.

Felix Balde :
The light that shines in men as learning's fruit
Must needs give nourishment to all the powers
Which serve world-cycles in the earth's dark depths.
Already now a long time have they starved
Well-nigh entirely reft of sustenance.
For that which grows to-day in human brains
Doth only serve the surface of the earth,
And doth not penetrate unto its depths.
Some strange new superstition now doth haunt
These clever human heads : they turn their gaze
Unto primeval origins of earth
And will but spectres see in spirit spheres,
Thought out by vain illusion of the sense.
A merchant surely would consider mad
A purchaser, who would speak thus to him :
' The mists and fog, that hover in the vale,
Can certainly condense to solid gold ;

And with such gold thou shalt be paid thy debt.'
The merchant will not willingly await
To have his ducats made from fog and mist ;
And yet whene'er his soul doth thirst to find
Solution of the riddles set by life,
Should science offer him such payments then
For spirit needs and debts, right willingly
Will he accept whole solar systems built
Out of primeval world-containing fog.
The teacher who discovers some unknown
And luckless layman, who would fain presume
To heights of science or of scholarship
Without examinations duly passed
Will surely threaten him with his contempt.
Yet science doth not doubt that without proof
And without spirit earth's primeval beasts
Could change themselves to men by their own power.

Theodosius :
Why dost thou not thyself reveal to men
The sources of this light of thine, which streams
Forth from thy soul with such resplendent ray ?

Felix Balde :
A fancy-monger and a man of dreams
They call me, who are well-disposed to me :
But others think of me as some dull fool
Who, all untaught of them, doth follow out
His own peculiar bent of foolishness.

Retardus :
Thou show'st already how untaught thou art
By the simplicity of this thy speech :

Thou dost not know that men of science have
Sufficient shrewdness to make just the same
Objection to themselves ;—
And if they make it not they well know why.

Felix Balde :
I know full well that they are shrewd enough
To understand the objections I have voiced,
But not so shrewd as to believe in them.

Theodosius :
What must we do that we may forthwith give
The powers of earth what they do need so much ?

Felix Balde :
So long as on the earth men only heed
Such men as these, who wish not to recall
Their spirit's primal source, so long will starve
The mineral forces buried in earth's depths.

The Other Maria :
I gather, brother Felix, from thy words,
That thou dost think the time hath now expired
When we did serve earth's purposes the best
By showing forth from depths of our own life
Though uninitiate, by wisdom's light
The living way of spirit and of love.
In thee the spirits of the earth arose
To give thee light without the lore of books :
In me did love hold sway, the love that dwells
And works within the life of men on earth.
And now we wish to join our brethren here,—

Who, consecrate, within this temple serve,—
And bring forth fruitful work in human souls.

Benedictus :
If ye unite your labour now with us,
Then must the consecrated work succeed.
The wisdom which I gave unto my son
Will surely blossom forth in him as power.

Theodosius :
If ye unite your labour now with us,
Then must the thirst for sacrifice arise.
And through the soul life of whoever seeks
The spirit-path, will breathe the warmth of love.

Romanus :
If ye unite your labour now with us,
Then must the fruits of spirit ripen fast.
Deeds will spring up, which through the spirit's work
Will blossom from the soul's discipleship.

Retardus :
If they unite their labour now with you
What shall become of me ? My deeds will prove
Fruitless to those who would the spirit seek.

Benedictus :
Then wilt thou change to other forms of being :
Since now thou hast accomplished all thy work.

Theodosius :
Henceforth thou wilt live on in sacrifice
If thou dost freely sacrifice thyself.

Romanus :
Thou wilt bear fruit on earth in human deeds
If I myself may tend the fruits for thee.

Johannes (speaking out of his meditation, as in the previous scene) :
The brethren in the temple showed themselves
To my soul-sight, in feature like
To men who in the world of sense I know.
Benedictus alone, was like himself in Spirit.
He who stood on his left seemed like that man
Who through the feelings only would draw nigh
The spirit-realms. The third resembled him,
Who doth but recognize the powers of life
When they show forth through wheels and outward works.
The fourth I do not know. The wife who saw
The spirit's light after her husband's death,
I recognized in her own inmost being.
And Felix Balde came just as in life.

The curtain falls slowly

Scene 6

Scene the same as the Fourth.

(*The Spirit of the Elements stands in the same place.*)

Felicia :

Thou calledst me. What wouldst thou hear of me ?

Spirit :

Two men did I present unto the earth
Whose spirit-powers were fructified through thee.
They found their soul's awakening in thy words
When barren thought had paralysed them both.
Thy gifts to them make thee my debtor too.
Their spirit doth not of itself suffice
To render full repayment unto me
For all the service which I did for them.

Felicia :

For many years one of these men did come
To our small cottage, that he might obtain
The strength that lent unto his words their fire.
Later he brought the other with him too ;
And so they two consumed the fruits, whose worth
Was then unknown to me : but little good
Did I receive from them as recompense.

Their kind of knowledge to our son they gave,
With good intent indeed, but yet the child
Found nought therein but death unto his soul.
He grew to manhood steeped in all the light,
His father Felix, through the spirit-speech,
Taught him from fountains and from rocks and hills:
To this was joined all that had lived and grown
In my own soul from my first childhood's years;
And yet our son's clear spirit-sense was killed
By the deep gloom of sombre sciences.
Instead of some blithe happy child, there grew
A man of desert soul and empty heart.
And now forsooth thou dost demand of me
That I should pay what they do owe to thee!

Spirit:
It must be so, for thou at first didst serve
The earthly part in them; and so through me
The spirit bids thee now complete the work.

Felicia:
'Tis not my wont to shrink from any debt;
But tell me first what detriment will grow
In mine own self from this love-service done?

Spirit:
What thou at first didst do for them on earth,
Robbed of his strength of soul thine only son;
And what thou givest to their spirits now
Is lost henceforth to thee from thine own self;
Which lessening of the powers of life in thee
Will show as ugliness in thine own flesh.

Felicia :
They robbed my child of all his strength of soul,
And in return I needs must wander forth
A monster in the sight of men, that fruits
May ripen for them, which work little good !

Spirit :
Yet thy work aids the welfare of mankind
And leads as well to thine own happiness.
Thy mother's beauty and thy child's own life
Will blossom for thee in a loftier way,
When one day in the souls and hearts of men,
New spirit-powers shall seed and fructify.

Felicia :
What must I do ?

Spirit :
Mankind thou hast inspired
Full often with thy words. Inspire then now
The spirits of the rocks : in this same hour
Thou must bring forth from out thy treasured store
Of fairy pictures some one tale to give
Those beings who do serve me in my work.

Felicia :
So be it then :—A being once did live
Who flew from East to West, as runs the sun.
He flew o'er lands and seas, and from this height
He looked upon the doings of mankind.
He saw how men did one another love,
And, how in hatred they did persecute.
Yet naught could stay this being in his flight,

For love and hatred none the less bring forth
Full many thousand times the same results.
Yet o'er one house—there must the being stay ;
For therein dwelt a tired and weary man,
Who pondered on the love of humankind,
And pondered also over human hate.
His contemplations had already graved
Deep furrows on his brow ; his hair was white.
And, grieving o'er this man, the being lost
His sun-guide's leadership, and stayed with him
Within his room e'en when the sun went down.
And when the sun arose again, once more
The being joined the spirit of the sun ;
And once again he saw mankind pass through
The cycle of the earth in love and hate.
But when he came, still following the sun,
A second time above that selfsame house,
His gaze did fall upon a dying man.

Germanus, invisible behind the rock, speaks. As he speaks, he gradually drags his unwieldy size on to the stage ; his feet like clogs are almost earth-bound.)

Germanus :

A man once lived, who went from East to West :
Whose eager thirst for knowledge lured him on
O'er land and sea ; with learned pedantry
He looked upon the doings of mankind.
He saw how men did one another love,
And, how in hatred they did persecute ;
And every day anon he fondly hoped
His wisdom's goal was now at length in sight.

But, though the world is ruled by love and hate,
Yet could he not combine them into law.
A thousand single cases wrote he down,
Yet still he lacked the comprehending eye.
This dull, dry seeker after truth once met
Upon his path a being formed of light;
Who found existence fraught with heaviness
Since it must live in constant combat with
A darksome being formed of shadows black.
'Who art thou then?' the dry truth-seeker asked.
'Love,' said the one; the other answered, 'Hate.'
But these two beings' words fell on deaf ears;
The man heard not, but wandered blindly on
In his dry search for truth from East to West.

Felicia:
And who art thou, who thus against my wish
Dost parody my words in his own way
Until they sound a very mockery?

Germanus:
Only a dwarf-like image of me lives
In man, and therein many things are thought,
That are but mockery of their own selves,
When I do show them in the actual size,
In which they do appear within my brain.

Felicia:
And therefore dost thou also mock at me?

Germanus:
I must right often ply this trade of mine;
Yet mostly men do hear me not, so now

I seized for once this opportunity
To speak as well where men can hear my words.

Johannes (*out of his meditation*) :
This was the man, who of himself did say
That spirit-light grew of its own accord
Within his brain ; and Dame Felicia came,
Just like her husband, as she is in life.

Curtain

Scene 7

The domain of spirit: a scene of various coloured crystal rocks and a few trees. Maria, Philia, Astria, Luna; the child; Johannes, first at a distance, then coming nearer; Theodora; lastly Benedictus.

Maria:

My sisters who of old
So oft my helpers were;
In this hour help me too
That Ether of the worlds
May quiver in itself;
Resound in harmony,
And thus resounding reach
And permeate a soul
With knowledge that is true.
I now can see the signs
Which guide us to our work;
For your work must to-day
Unite itself with mine.
Johannes who doth strive
Must be by our designs
To real existence raised.
Within the temple walls
The brethren counsel took
How they should raise him up
From depths to heights of light;

From us they do expect
To fill the soul with power
For such high spirit flight.
From breadths of space shalt thou,
My Philia, win for me
Clear essence of the light ;
And fill thyself with all
The charm of sound which wells
From soul-creating power.
That thou mayst give to me
Gifts gathered by thyself
From out the spirit's depths.
Then can I weave for him
Their perfect harmonies
In the soul-stirring dance
And rhythm of the spheres.
And thou, my Astrid,
Dear image of my spirit,
Shalt cause within the light
The power of shade to grow
That colours may shine forth.
To formless harmonies
Thou shalt give shape, and thus
World-substance, weaving life,
May sound upon its way.
So I can give to man
When he doth seek therefor
A spirit consciousness.
And thou, strong Luna, too,
So firm in thine own self ;
E'en like the living sap
Hid deep within the tree,

To these thy sister's gifts
Do then unite thine own.
Impress thyself thereon
That he who seeks may find
True wisdom's surety.

Philia :
I will myself imbue
With clearest rays of light
From cosmic spaces wide.
I will breathe deep within
Sound-substance that gives life
From distant ether-bounds,
Dear sister, that thou may'st
Succeed in this thy work.

Astrid :
Through all the streaming light
I will weave darkness in
To cloud its radiant beam.
I will make dense and thick
The living life of sound ;
That glowing it may sound
And sounding it may glow,
Dear sister, that thou may'st
Direct the soul-life's rays.

Luna :
Soul substance will I warm,
Life's ether harden too.
That they may thus condense
And may thus feel themselves

As living in themselves
And powerful to create,
Dear sister, that thou may'st
Prove wisdom's certainty
To mankind's seeking soul.

Maria :
From Philia's realm
Shall stream forth delight ;
And transforming powers
Of Undines arouse
The sensitive soul.
That he who is roused
May feel all the mirth
And feel all the woe
In cosmic domains.

From Astrid's close web
Love's joy shall come forth.
The Sylphs' airy life
Shall rouse in the soul
Self-sacrifice true ;
That consecrate man
May rouse to new life
Souls laden with grief,
Souls yearning for joy.

From Luna's domain
Shall firmness stream forth.
And Fire-Beings' might
Shall form for the soul
Security's strength.

That he who doth know
May find his own self
In weaving of souls
And life of the worlds.

Philia :
From cosmic spirits I
Will beg their being's light
The soul-sense to enchant,
The sound too of their words
To charm the spirit's ear ;
That he, whose wakening nears,
May raise himself aloft
Upon the paths of soul
Unto celestial heights.

Astrid :
The love-streams will I guide
That fill the world with warmth
Unto the heart of man
Who is initiate ;
That thus he may bring down
Into his work on earth
The grace of Heaven, and give
The joy of holy rite
Unto the sons of men.

Luna :
From primal powers will I
For might and courage pray
And lay them deep within
The human seeker's heart :
That so trust in himself

May guide him through his life,
Then shall he feel secure
In his own self, and pluck
Each moment's ripened fruit
And draw the seeds therefrom
For all eternity.

Maria :
With you, my sisters, joined in noble work
I shall succeed in what I long to do.
But hark ! There rises to our world of light
The cry of him who hath been sorely tried.
(*Johannes appears.*)

Johannes :
'Tis thou, Maria ! Then my suffering
Hath at the last born richest fruit for me.
It hath withdrawn me from the phantom shape
Which I at first did make out of myself,
And which then held me fast, a prisoner.
Pain do I thank for thus enabling me
To reach thee o'er the pathways of the soul.

Maria :
And what then was the path that led thee here ?

Johannes :
I felt myself from bonds of sense released :
My sight was freed from that close barrier,
Which hid all but the present from mine eyes.
Quite otherwise I viewed the life of one
I knew on earth, and looked beyond the space
Bound by the present moment's narrow ring.
Capesius, whom with the eyes of sense

In his old age I saw—this man
The spirit placed before my soul a youth ;
As first he entered on life's thorny path
Full of those dreams of hope, which ofttimes brought
A group of faithful hearers to his feet.
And Strader, also could I see e'en thus
As he appeared in earthly life when young,
E'er he had full outgrown his cloistered youth :
And I could see what he might once have been,
If he had followed out in that same way
The goal he set before himself of old.
And only those who in their earthly life
Are filled already with the spirit's power
Appear unchanged within the spirit-realms.
Both Dame Felicia and good Felix too
Had kept the forms in which they lived on earth,
When I beheld them with my spirit's sight.
And then my guides showed kindness unto me,
And spake of gifts which shall one day be mine
When I can reach to wisdom's lofty heights.
And many things besides have I beheld
With spirit-organs which sense-sight at first
Had shown to me in its own narrow way:
And judgment's all-illuminating light
Irradiated this new world of mine.
But whether I lived in some shadowy dream,
Or whether spirit-truth surrounded me
Already, I could not as yet decide.
Whether my spirit-sight was really stirred
By other things, or whether mine own self
Expanded into some world of its own,
I knew not. Then didst thou appear thyself ;

Not as thou seemest at the present time,
Nor as the past beheld thee ; nay—I saw
Thee as thou art in spirit evermore.
Not human was thy nature : in thy soul
Clear could I recognize the spirit-light,
Which worked not as man clothed in flesh doth work.
As spirit did it act, that strives to do
Such work as in eternity hath root.
And only now, when I dare stand complete
In spirit nigh thee, doth the full light glow.
In thee my sight of sense already grasped
Reality so fast, that certainty
Doth meet me even here in spirit-realms ;
And well I know that now before me stands
No phantom shape. 'Tis thy true character
In which I met thee yonder, and in which
'Tis now permitted me to meet thee here.

Theodora :

I feel compelled to speak. A glow of light
From out thy brow, Maria, upward mounts.
This glow takes shape, and grows to human form.
It is a man with spirit deep imbued,
And other men do gather round his feet.
I gaze into dim times, long passed away
On that good man who rose from out thy head :
His eyes do shine with perfect peace of soul ;
And deep true feeling glows in every line
And feature of his noble countenance.
A woman facing him mine eye doth see,
Who listens with devotion to the words
Proceeding from his mouth ; which words I hear,

And thus they sound : ' Ye have unto your gods
Looked up with awed devotion until now.
These gods I love, as ye love them yourselves.
They did present unto your thought its power,
And planted courage in your heart ; but yet
Their gifts spring from a higher spirit still.'
I see how rage doth spread amongst the throng
At this man's words. I hear their mad wild cries :
' Kill him ; for he desires to take from us
The gifts the gods have given to our race.'
But unconcernedly the man speaks on.
He tells now of that God in human form,
Who did descend to earth and conquer death.
He tells of Christ ; and as his words flow on
The souls around grow calm and pacified.
One only of the heathen hearts resists,
And swears it will wreak vengeance on the man.
I recognize this heart ; it beats again
In yonder child, that nestles at thy side.
The messenger of Christ speaks to it thus :
' Thy fate doth not permit thee to draw nigh
In this life ; but I shall wait patiently,
For thy path leads thee to me in the end.'
The woman who doth stand before the man
Falls at his feet and feels herself transformed.
A soul prays to the God in human form ;
A heart doth love God's messenger on earth.

(*Johannes sinks upon his knees before Maria.*)

Maria :

Johannes, that which dawneth in thy mind
Thou shalt awaken to full consciousness.

E'en now within thee hath thy memory
Wrenched itself free from fetterings of sense.
Thou hast found me, and thou hast felt thyself,
As we were joined in former life on earth.
Thou wast the woman whom the seeress saw,
For so didst thou lie prostrate at my feet,
When I as messenger of Christ did come
Unto thy tribe in days long since gone by.
What in Hibernia's consecrated shrines
Was then entrusted to me by that God,
Who dwelt in human form, and did become
A conqueror o'er all the powers of death,
I had to bring to tribes, in whom still lived
A soul that brought a willing sacrifice
To mighty Odin, and with sorrow thought
Upon the death of Balder, god of light.
The power, which from that message grew in thee,
Attracted thee to me from the first day
Thine eyes of sense beheld me in this life.
And since it strove so mightily in us,
And yet remained unrecognized by both,
It wove into our life those sufferings,
Which we o'ercame. Yet in that pain itself
There lay the power to guide us on our way
To spirit-realms, where we might recognize
And know in very truth each other's soul.
Intolerably did thy pain increase
Through all the men who thronged thee round about,
With whom by fate's decree thou art conjoined.
Hence was the revelation of their selves
Able so fiercely to convulse thine heart.
These men hath Karma gathered round thee now,

To wake in thee the power that once did urge
Thee on the path of life, which selfsame power
Hath thus far roused thee, that, from body freed,
Thou couldst ascend into the spirit-world.
Thou standest nearest to my soul, since thou
Hast kept through pain thy steadfast faith in me.
And therefore hath it fallen to my lot
That consecration to complete in thee,
To which thou owest this thy spirit-light.
The brethren, who within the temple serve,
Have wakened sight in thee ; yet canst thou know
That what thou seest is very truth indeed,
Only when thou dost find in spirit-realms
A being, unto whom in worlds of sense
Thou wast united in thine inmost soul.
And that this being might thus meet thee here,
Before thee did the brethren send me out.
And this did prove the hardest of thy tests,
When I was summoned here to wait for thee.
Our leader, Benedictus, did I ask
To solve for me the riddle of my life,
That seemed to be so cruel and unkind ;
And blessedness streamed from his every word,
Telling of his own mission and of mine.
He told me of the spirit I must serve
With all the power which I have found in me.
And at his words it seemed to me as though,
All in a moment clearest spirit-light
Streamed through and through my soul, and suffering
Was changed to joyous blessedness ; one thought
Alone then filled my soul ;—he gave me light,
Yea, light, that gave to me the power of sight ;—

And in that thought there lived the firm resolve
To this same spirit to devote myself
And make me ready for the sacrifice
Which in due time would draw me near to him.
This thought did generate the highest power:
It gave wings to my soul and wafted me
Into that realm where thou hast found me now.
In that same moment when I felt released
From my sense body, I was free to turn
My spirit's eye upon thee, and I saw
Not only thee, Johannes, standing there;
I saw the woman too, that followed me
In ancient times; and had bound close to mine
Her destiny. E'en thus was spirit-truth
Revealed to me in spirit-realms through thee,
Who in the world of sense already wast
Made one with me in inmost consciousness.
So did I gain this spirit-certainty
And was endowed to give it unto thee.
Sending a ray of highest, tenderest love
To Benedictus, I went on before;
And he hath given unto thee the power
To follow me into the spirit-spheres.

(*Benedictus appears.*)

Benedictus:

Ye here have found yourselves in spirit-realms;
And so it is permitted unto me
To stand once more beside you in these realms.
I could confer the power that urged you here,
But I could not conduct you here myself.
Thus reads the law, which I must needs obey:—

Ye must through your own selves first gain the eye
Of spirit, which doth here make visible
My spirit to you. Ye have just begun
E'en now the path of spirit-pilgrimage.
Henceforth indeed upon the plane of sense
Endowed with novel powers shall ye both stand,
And with the spirit in your hearts unsealed
The cause of human progress shall ye serve,
For Fate itself hath so united you,
That ye together may unfold the powers
Which needs must serve divine creative work.
And as ye journey on the path of souls
Wisdom will teach you that the loftiest tasks
May be achieved for the weal of men
When souls that gave each other spirit certainty
Unite in faith to do salvation's work.
My spirit-guidance hath united you
To realize each other : now do ye
Unite yourselves to do the spirit's work.
May powers that dwell within this realm confer
On you through these my lips this Word of strength :—
' The weaving essence of the light streams forth
From man to man to fill all worlds with truth.
The grace of love spreads warmth from soul to soul
To work out bliss eternal for all worlds.
And spirit-messengers come forth to wed
Man's works of love and grace to cosmic aims.
And when the man who finds himself in man
Can wed these twain, there doth stream forth on earth
True spirit-light from his warm loving soul.'

Curtain

Interlude

Scene : same as in the Prelude. The day after the play to which Estella, in the Prelude, invited her friend to accompany her.

Sophia : Forgive me, dear Estelle, for keeping you waiting. I had to attend to something for the children.

Estella : Here I am back again with you already. I long for your sympathy whenever anything stirs me deeply.

Sophia : Well, you know that I shall always sympathize most warmly with you in your interests.

Estella : This play, of which I spoke to you, *Outcasts from Body and from Soul* touched me so deeply. Does it seem to you odd when I say that there were moments when all I had ever known of human sorrow stood before me ? With highest artistic force the work not only gives the outer mischances happening to so many people, but also points out with wonderful penetration the deepest agonies of the soul.

Sophia : One cannot, I fear, form a proper conception of a work of art by simply hearing of its contents. But I would like you to tell me what stirred you so.

Estella : The construction of the play was admirable. The artist wished to show how a young painter loses

all his creative desire, because he begins to doubt his love for a woman. She had endowed him with the power to develop his promising talents. Pure enthusiasm for his art had produced in her the most beautiful love of sacrifice. To her he owed the fullest development of his abilities in his chosen field. He blossomed, as it were, in the sunshine of his benefactress. Constant association with this woman developed his gratitude into passionate love. This caused him to neglect, more and more, a poor creature who was faithfully devoted to him, and who finally died of grief, because she had to confess to herself that she had lost the heart of the man she loved. When he heard of her death, the news did not seriously disturb him, for his heart belonged entirely to his benefactress. Yet he grew ever more and more certain that her noble feeling of friendship for him would never turn to passionate love. This conviction drove all creative joy from his soul, and his inner life grew constantly more desolate. In this condition of life the poor girl, whom he had forsaken, came again into his mind, and a wrecked life was all that resulted from a hopeful and promising man. Without prospect of a single ray of light he pined away. All this is portrayed with intense dramatic vividness.

Sophia: I can easily see how the play must have worked upon your feelings. As a girl you always suffered intensely at the destiny of such people, who had been driven to bitterness by heavy misfortunes in their life.

Estella: My dear Sophy; you misunderstand me. I can easily distinguish between what is real and what is merely artistic. And criticism fails, I know, if one

carries into it the feelings one had in life. What stirred me here so deeply was the really perfect representation of a deep problem of life. I was once again able to realize clearly how art can only mount to such heights, when it keeps close to the fulness of life. As soon as it departs therefrom, its works are untrue.

Sophia: I understand you perfectly when you speak like that. I have always admired the artists who could represent what you call the reality of life. And I believe a great many have that power,—especially nowadays. Nevertheless even the very highest attainments leave behind them in my soul a certain discomfort. For a long time I was unable to explain this to myself, but one day the light came that brought the answer.

Estella: You mean to tell me, that your conception of the world has dispelled your appreciation of so-called realistic art.

Sophia: Dear Estelle, let us not speak of my conception of the world to-day. You know quite well, that the feeling I have just described was entirely familiar to me long before I knew anything at all about what you call my 'conception of the world.' And these feelings are not only aroused in me with reference to so-called realistic art: but other things also create a similar feeling in me. It grows especially marked when I become aware of what I might call, in a higher sense, the want of truth in certain works of art.

Estella: There I really cannot follow you.

Sophia: A vivid grasp of real truth must needs create in the heart a sense of a certain poverty in works of art. For of course the greatest artist is always a novice compared with nature in her perfection. The most

accomplished artist fails to give me what I can get from the revelation of a landscape or a human countenance.

Estella: But that is in the nature of the case and cannot be altered.

Sophia: But it could be altered, if men would only become clear on one point. They could say that it is irrational for the soul to reproduce what higher powers have already set before us as the highest works of art. These same powers have implanted in man an impulse to continue the great work of creation, in order to give the world what they themselves have not yet placed before the senses. In all that man can create, the original powers of creation have left nature incomplete. Why should he reproduce nature's perfections in an imperfect form, when he has the ability to change the imperfect into perfection? If you think of this assertion as changed into an elemental feeling you will understand why I feel a sense of distress towards much that you call art. It is distressing to see an external sense-reality imperfectly portrayed in realistic art. On the other hand, the least perfect representation of what is concealed behind the outwardly observed phenomenon may prove a revelation.

Estella: You are really talking of something that nowhere exists. No true artist really tries to give a bare reproduction of nature.

Sophia: That is just why so many works of art are imperfect; for the creative function leads of itself beyond nature, and the artist does not know the appearance of what is outside his senses.

Estella: I see no possibility of our coming to any understanding with one another on this point. It is

indeed sad that, in these most important problems of the soul, my best friend follows views so different from my own. I hope our friendship may yet fall on better days.

Sophia : On such a point we shall surely be able to accept whatever life may bring us.

Estella : Au revoir, dear Sophy.

Sophia : Good-bye, dear Estelle.

Curtain

Scene 8

Same room as for Scene 1. Johannes at an easel, before which Capesius, Maria, and Strader are also seated.

Johannes:

I think those are the final touches now,
And feel that I may call my work complete.
Especial pleasure hath it given me
Thy nature to interpret through mine art.

Capesius:

This picture is a marvel unto me,
But its creator still more wonderful.
For naught, which men like me have up till now
Considered possible, can be compared
With this change that hath taken place in thee.
One only can believe, when actual sight
Compels belief. We met three years ago;
And I was then allowed to count myself
A visitor in that community,
In which thou didst attain thine excellence.
A man of sad demeanour wast thou then,
Witness each glance and aspect of thy face.
Once did I hear a lecture in thy group,
And at the end felt urged to add thereto
Words that were wrenched with pain from out my soul.

I spake in such a mood wherein one doth
Think almost always of oneself alone ;
And none the less my gaze did ever rest
Upon that painter, whelmed 'neath sorrow's load,
Who sat and kept still silence, far apart.
Silent he pondered in a fashion strange,
And one might well believe that he heard not
A single word of all those spoken near.
The sorrow unto which he gave himself
Seemed of itself to have a separate life ;
It seemed as though the man himself heard not,
But rather that his very grief had ears :
It is perhaps not inappropriate
To say he was by sorrow quite obsessed.
Soon after that day did we meet again,
And even then there was a change in thee ;
For happiness did beam forth from thine eyes ;
Within thy nature power did dwell again,
And noble fire did ring in all thy words.
Thou didst express a wish to me that day—
Which seemed to me most strange and curious—
To be my pupil didst thou then desire.
And of a truth thou hast throughout these years
With utmost diligence absorbed thyself
In all I had to say on world events.
And, as we grew more intimate, I then
Did know the riddle of thine artist life,
And each new picture proved a fresh surprise.
My thought in former days was ill-inclined
To soar to worlds beyond the life of sense—
Not that I doubted them—but yet it seemed
Presumptuous to draw near with eager mind.

But now I must admit that thou hast changed
My point of view. I hear thee oft repeat
That thine artistic skill depends alone
Upon the gift to function consciously
In other worlds ; and that thou canst implant
Naught in thy works but what thou hast first seen
In spirit worlds : indeed thy works do show
How spirit stands revealed in actual life.

Strader :
Never so little have I understood
Thy speech ; for surely in all artists' work
The living spirit is thus manifest.
How therefore doth thy friend, Thomasius,
Differ from other masters in his art ?

Capesius :
Ne'er have I doubted that the spirit shows
Itself in man, who none the less remains
Unconscious of its nature. He creates
Through this same spirit, but perceives it not.
Thomasius however doth create
In worlds of sense what he in spirit-realms
Can consciously behold ; and many times
Hath he assured me, that, for men like him,
No other method of creation serves.

Strader :
Thomasius is a marvel unto me,
And freely I admit this picture here
Hath first revealed to me in his true self
Capesius, whom I thought I knew full well.

In thought I knew him ; but this work doth show
How little of him I had really known.

Maria :
How comes it, doctor, that thou canst admire
The greatness of this work so much, and yet
Canst still deny the greatness of its source ?

Strader :
What hath my wonder at the artist's work
In common with my faith in spirit-sight ?

Maria :
One can indeed admire a work, e'en when
One hath no faith in that which is its source ;
Yet in this case there would be naught to rouse
Our admiration, had this artist not
Trodden the path that led to spirit-life.

Strader :
Yet still we must not say that whoso'er
Doth to the spirit wholly give himself
Will consciously be guided by its power.
The spirit power creates in artists' souls,
E'en as it works within the trees and stones :
Yet is the tree not conscious of itself.
And only he, who sees it from without,
Can recognize the spirit's work therein.
So too each artist lives within his work
And not in spiritual experience.
But when mine eyes now on this picture fall,
I do forget all that allures to thought ;
The very soul-force of my friend doth gleam

From out those eyes, and yet—they are but paint!
The seeker's thoughtfulness dwells on that brow;
And e'en his noble warmth of words doth stream
From all the colour-tones with which thy brush
Hath solved the mystery of portraiture.
Ah, these same colours, surely they are flat!
And yet they are not; they seem visible
Only to vanish straightway from my sight.
The moulding too doth seem like colour's work;
And yet it tells of spirit intertwined
In every line, and many things besides,
That are not of itself.—Where then is that
Whereof it speaks? Not on the canvas there,
Where only spirit-barren colours lie.
Is it then in Capesius himself?
But why can I perceive it not in him?
Thomasius, thou hast so painted here
That what is painted doth destroy itself,
The moment that the eye would fathom it.
I cannot grasp whereto it urgeth me.
What must I grasp from it? What should I seek?
I fain would pierce this canvas through and through
To find what I must seek within its depths;
To find where I may grasp all that which streams
From this same picture into my soul's core.
I *must* attain it.—Oh—deluded fool!
It seems as though some ghost were haunting me,
A ghost I cannot see, nor have I power
Which doth enable me to focus it.
Thou dost paint ghostly things, Thomasius,
Ensnaring them by magic in thy work.
They do allure us on to seek for them,

And yet they never let themselves be found.
Oh—how I suffer from your pictures!

Capesius:
My friend, in this same moment hast thou lost
The thinker's peace of mind. Consider now,
If from this picture some ghost speaks to thee
Then I myself must surely ghostly be.

Strader:
Forgive me, friend, 'twas weakness on my part.

Capesius:
Ah, speak but good, not evil, of this hour!
For though thou seemed'st to have lost thyself,
Yet in reality thou wast upraised
Far, far above thyself; and thou didst feel,
Even as I myself full oft have felt.
At such times, howsoe'er one feels oneself
Strong-armoured at all points with logic's might,
One can but be convinced that one is seized
By some strange power that can have origin
Not in sense-knowledge or sense-reasoning.
Who hath endowed this picture with such power?
To me it seems the symbol in sense-life
Of soul-experiences gained thereby.
It hath taught me to recognize my soul,
As never heretofore seemed possible;
And most convincing this self-knowledge proved.
Thomasius did search me through and through:
For unto him was given power to pierce
Through sense-appearance unto spirit-self.
With his developed sight he penetrates

To spirit verity ; and thus for me
Those ancient words of wisdom : ' Know thyself,'
In new light do appear. To know ourselves
E'en as we are, we must first find that power
Within ourselves, which, as true spirit, doth
Conceal itself from us in our own selves.

Maria :
We must, to find ourselves, that power unfold
Which can pierce through into our very souls :
And truly do these words of wisdom speak—
Unfold thyself and thou shalt find thyself.

Strader :
If we admit now, that Thomasius
Hath through th' unfolding of his spirit power,
Attained to knowledge of that entity,
That dwells, invisible, within thy soul,
Then must we say that on each plane of life
Knowledge doth differ.

Capesius :
So would I maintain.

Strader :
If matters thus do stand, then is all thought
Nothing : all learning but illusory ;
And every moment I must lose myself. . . .
Oh, do leave me alone. . . .

(*Exit.*)

Capesius :
I'll go with him.
(*Exit.*)

Maria :
Capesius is nearer far to-day
To spirit lore, then he himself doth think ;
And Strader suffers deeply. What his soul
So hotly craves, his spirit cannot find.

Johannes :
The inner nature of these two did stand
Already then before my spirit's eye
When first I dared to tread the realm of souls.
As a young man I saw Capesius,
And Strader in the years he hath not reached
By some long span as yet. Capesius
Did show a youthful promise which conceals
Much that this life will not allow to come
To due fruition in the realms of sense.
I was attracted to his inner self :
In his soul's essence I could first behold
What is the essential kernel of a man ;
And how a man's peculiarities
In earthly life do manifest themselves
As consequences of some former life.
I saw the struggles that he overcame,
Which in his other lives had origin,
And which have shaped his present mode of life.
I could not see his death-discarding being
With my soul's vision, yet I did perceive
Within his nature that which could not rise
From his surroundings as they are to-day.
Thus in the picture I could reproduce,
What dwells within the basis of his soul.
My brush was guided by the powers, which he

Unfolded in his former lives on earth.
If thus I have revealed his inmost self,
My picture will have served the aim, which I
Did purpose for it in my thought : for as
A work of art I do not rate it high.

Maria :
It will confirm its work within that soul
To whom it showed the path to spirit-realms.

Curtain falls whilst Maria and Johannes are still in the room

Scene 9

Same region as in Scene 2. From rocks and springs resounds : **'O man, feel thou thyself.'**

Johannes :

O man, feel thou thyself ! For three long years
I have sought strength of soul, with courage winged,
Which doth give truth unto these words, whereby
A man may free himself to conquer first ;
Then conquering himself may freedom find
Through these same words : ' O man, feel thou thyself.'

(*From rocks and springs resounds :* **'O man, feel thou thyself.')**

I note their presence in mine inmost soul,
Their whispered breathing thrills my spirit-ear ;
And hid within themselves they bear the hope,
That they will grow and lead man's spirit up,
Out of his narrow self to world-wide space,
E'en as a giant oak mysteriously
Builds his proud body from an acorn small.
Spirit can cause to live in its own self
All weaving forms of water and of air,
And all that doth make hard the solid earth.
Man too can grasp whate'er hath ta'en firm hold
Of being, in the elements, in souls,

In time, in spirits and eternity.
The whole world's essence lies in one soul's core,
When such power in the spirit roots itself,
Which can give truth unto these selfsame words :
O man, experience and feel thyself—

(*From rocks and springs resounds :* **'O man, feel thou thyself.'**)

I feel them sounding in my very soul,
Rousing themselves to grant me strength and power.
The light doth live in me ; the brightness speaks
Around me ; soul light germinates in me ;
The brightness of all worlds creates in me :
O man, experience and feel thyself ;

(*From rocks and springs resounds :* **'O man, feel thou thyself.'**)

I find myself secure on every side,
Where'er these words of power do follow me.
They will give light in sense-life's darkened ways :
They will sustain me on the spirit-heights :
Soul-substance will they pour into my heart
Through all the æons of eternity.
I feel the essence of the worlds in me,
And I must find myself in all the worlds.
I gaze upon the nature of my soul,
Which mine own power hath vivified ; I rest
Within myself ; I look on rocks and springs ;
They speak the native language of my soul.
I find myself again within that soul,

Into whose life I brought such bitter grief ;
And out of her I call unto myself :
' Thou must find me again and ease my pain.'
The spirit-light will give to me the strength
To live this other self in mine own self.
Oh hopeful words, ye stream forth strength to me
From all the worlds : O man, feel thou thyself.

(*From rocks and springs resounds :* **'O man, feel thou thyself.')**

Ye make me feel my feebleness, and yet
Ye place me near the highest aims of gods ;
And blissfully I feel creative power
From these high aims in my weak, earthly form.
And out of mine own Self shall stand revealed
Those powers, whereof the germ lies hid in me.
And I will give myself unto the world
By living out mine own essential life ;
Yea, all the might of these words will I feel,
Which sound within me softly at the first.
They shall become for me a quickening fire
In my soul-powers and on my spirit-paths.
I feel how now my very thought doth pierce
To deep-concealed foundations of the world ;
And how it streams through them with radiant light.
E'en thus doth work the fructifying power
Of these same words : O man, feel thou thyself.

(*From rocks and springs resounds :* **'O man, feel thou thyself.')**

From heights of light a being shines on me,
And I feel wings to lift myself to him :
I too will free myself, like all those souls,
Who conquered self.

(*From springs and rocks resounds :* **'O man, feel thou thyself.'**)

That being do I see
Whom I would fain be like in future times.
The spirit in me shall grow free, through thee
Sublime example, I will follow thee.

(*Enter Maria.*)

The spirit-beings, who did take me up,
Have woken now the vision of my soul.
And as I gaze into the spirit worlds,
I feel in mine own self the quickening power
Of these same words : O man, feel thou thyself.

(*From springs and rocks resounds :* **'O man, feel thou thyself.'**)

Thou here, my friend ?

Maria :

My soul did urge me here.
I saw thy star shining in fullest strength.

Johannes :
This strength can I experience in myself.

Maria:
So closely are we one, that thy soul's life
Allows its light to shine forth in my soul.

Johannes:
Maria, then thou also art aware
Of what has just revealed itself to me.
Man's first conviction has just come to me,
And I have gained the certainty of self.
I feel that power to guide me everywhere
Lies in these words: O man, feel thou thyself.

(*From rocks and springs resounds:* **'O man, feel thou thyself.'**)

Curtain

Scene 10

A room for meditation as in Scene 3.

Theodosius (*in spirit-garb*) *:*
Now canst thou feel all worlds within thyself :
So now feel me as love-power of all worlds.
A nature, that is lighted up by me,
Feels its own being's power enhanced, whene'er
It gives itself to give another joy.
Thus do I work with true creative joy
To build the worlds. Without me none can live,
And naught without my strength can e'er exist.

Johannes :
So thou dost stand before my spirit's eye,
Joy-giver of all worlds. My spirit's strength
Doth feel creative joy, when I behold
Thee as the fruit of self-experience.
Within the temple to my spirit's eye
Once didst thou show thyself, yet at that time
I knew not whether dream or truth appeared.
But now the scales have fallen from mine eyes,
Which kept the spirit's light concealed from me :
Now know I that thou dost exist indeed.
I will reveal thy nature in my deeds ;
And they shall work salvation through thy power.
To Benedictus I owe deepest thanks :

Through wisdom hath he given me the strength
To turn my spirit's sight unto thy world.

Theodosius :
Feel me in thy soul-depths, and bear my power
To all the worlds. Thus, serving Love's behests
Thou shalt experience true blessedness.

Johannes :
I feel thy presence through its warming light ;
I feel creative power arise in me.
(*Theodosius disappears.*)
He hath departed : but he will return
And give me strength from out the springs of love.
His light can disappear but for awhile ;
Then, in mine own existence, it lives on.
I can resign myself unto my Self,
And feel Love's spirits in mine inmost soul :
By love uplifted I can feel my Self :
Love shall through me reveal himself to man.
(*He grows uncertain, as is gradually made manifest by his gestures.*)
Yet what is it I feel about me now ?
It seems some spirit-being draweth near.
Since I was counted worthy to receive
The spirit's sight, I feel it ever thus,
When evil powers desire to seize on me.
Yet, come what may, I have strength to resist ;
For I can feel myself within my Self ;
Which quickening words give strength invincible.
Yet now most strong resistance do I feel ;

Well may it be the fiercest of all foes :
But let him come, for he will find me armed.

Thou foe of Good ; 'tis surely thine own self !
For near me I can feel thy potent strength.
I know thou dost desire to rend in twain
Whate'er has wrenched itself from thy control.
But I shall strengthen in me that new strength,
Wherein thou canst have neither part nor lot.
(*Benedictus appears in spirit garb.*)

O Benedictus, fount of my new life !
It is not possible. It cannot be.
Nay, nay, it cannot be thyself. Thou art
Some vain illusion. Oh, revive in me
Ye good powers of my soul, and straightway crush
This phantom image, that would mock at me !

Benedictus :
Ask of thy soul now, whether it can feel,
What through these years my nearness meant to it.
Through me the fruits of wisdom grew for thee ;
And wisdom only now can lead thee on,
And fend from error in the spirit's realm.
So now experience me within thyself.
Yet wouldst thou go still further, thou must then
Enter that way, which to my temple leads.
And if my wisdom is to guide thee still
To loftier heights, it must flow from that spot
Where with my brethren close conjoined I work.

The strength of truth I gave to thee myself ;
And if this kindles power from its own fire
Within thyself, then shalt thou find the way.
(*Exit.*)

Johannes :
Oh, he doth leave me. How shall I decide
Whether I have some phantom form dispelled,
Or if reality hath left me now ?

Yet do I feel in me my strength renewed.
'Twas no illusion, but the man himself.
I will experience thee within myself,
O Benedictus, thou hast given me power,
Which, growing of itself within myself,
Will teach me to distinguish false from true.
And yet to vain illusion I succumbed :
I felt a shudd'ring fear at thine approach ;
And could consider thee a fantasy,
When thou didst stand before my very eyes.
(*Theodosius appears.*)

Theodosius :
From all illusion thou shalt free thyself,
When thou dost fill thyself with mine own strength :
To me could Benedictus lead thy steps,
But thine own wisdom now must be thy guide.
If thou dost only live what he hath put
Within thee, then thou canst not live thyself.
In freedom strive unto the heights of light ;
And for this striving now receive my strength.
(*Exit.*)

Johannes :
How glorious these words of thine do sound !
I must now live them out within myself.
From all illusion they will set me free,
If they but fill my nature to the full.

Work on then further in my soul's deep core,
Ye words, sublime and grand ! Ye surely must
Proceed from out the temple's shrine alone,
Since Benedictus' brother uttered you.
I feel already how ye mount within
Mine inmost being.

Soon shall ye resound
From out my very Self, that I may read
Your meaning rightly. Spirit, that doth dwell
Within me, forth from thy concealment come !
Now in thine own true nature show thyself !
I feel thy near approach : thou must appear.
(*Lucifer and Ahriman appear.*)

Lucifer :
O man, know me. O man, feel thou thyself.
From spirit guidance hast thou freed thyself,
And into earth's free realms thou hast escaped.
Midst earth's confusion thou didst seek to prove
Thine own existence ; and to find thyself
Was thy reward. So now use this reward.
In spirit-ventures keep thyself secure.
In the wide realms on high a being strange
Thou shalt discover, who to human lot
Will fetter thee, and will oppress thee too.
O man, feel thou thyself : O man, know me.

Ahriman:

O man, know thou thyself: O man, feel me.
From spirit darkness hast thou now escaped;
And thou hast found again the light of earth.
So now from my sure ground draw strength and truth.
The solid earth do I make hard and fast:
Yet canst thou also lose that certainty.
Weak hesitation can e'en now destroy
The power of being, and thou canst misuse
The spirit-strength e'en in the heights of light.
Thou canst be rent in twain within thyself.
O man, feel me. O man, know thou thyself.

(*Exit with Lucifer.*)

Johannes:

What meaneth this? First Lucifer arose
From me, and Ahriman did follow him.
Doth now some new illusion haunt my soul,
Although I prayed so ardently for truth?
Hath Benedictus' brother roused in me
Only those powers, which in the souls of men
Do but create illusion and deceit?

(*The following is a spirit voice coming from the heights.*)

Spirit:

To founts of worlds primeval
Thy surging thoughts do mount.
What unto illusion urged,
What in error held thee fast,
Appeareth to thee now in spirit-light.

Through whose fulness seeing,
Mankind doth think in truth ;
Through whose fulness striving,
Mankind doth live in Love.

Curtain

Scene II

The Temple of the Sun. Hidden site of the mysteries of the Hierophants.

Capesius and Strader appear as in Scene 4.

Retardus (to Capesius and Strader before him):

Ye have brought bitter grief to me, my friends.
The office which I did entrust to you
Ye have administered with ill success.
I call you now before my judgment seat.
To thee, Capesius, I did entrust
Full measure of the spirit, that ideas
Of mankind's upward striving might compose,
With graceful words, the content of thy speech,
Which should have worked convincingly on man.
Then thine activity I did direct
Into those gatherings of men, wherein
Thou didst Johannes and Maria meet.
Their tendency towards the spirit-sight
Thou shouldst have superseded by the power
Which thy words should have exercised on them.
Instead of that thou didst thyself give up
Unto the influence which flows from them.—
And to thee, Strader, did I show the way
That leads to scientific certainty.

Thou hadst by rigid thinking to destroy
The magic power that comes from spirit-sight.
But yet thou lackedst feeling's certain touch.
The power of thought did slip away from thee,
When opportunity for conquest came.
My fate is close-entwinéd with your deeds,
Through you are these two seekers after truth
Now lost for evermore from my domain ;
For to the Brethren I must give their souls.

Capesius :
Thy trusty messenger I could not be.
Thou gav'st me power to picture human life ;
And I could well portray whate'er inspired
The souls of men at this time or at that :
But yet it was impossible for me
To gift my words, which painted but the past,
With power to fill and satisfy men's souls.

Strader :
The weakness which must needs befall me too
Was but a true reflection of thine own.
Knowledge indeed thou couldest give to me :
But not the power to still that yearning voice,
Which strives for truth in every human heart.
Deep in mine inmost soul I none the less
Felt other powers continually arise.

Retardus :
See now then what result your weakness brings.
The Brethren are approaching with those souls
In whom they will o'erthrow my power. E'en now
Johannes and Maria feel their might.

(*Enter Benedictus with Lucifer and Ahriman; behind them Johannes and Maria.*)

Benedictus (*to Lucifer*) :
Johannes' and Maria's souls have now
No longer room for blind unseeing power :
To spirit-life they have been lifted up.

Lucifer :
Then must I straightway from their souls depart.
The wisdom unto which they have attained,
Doth give them power to see me, and my sway
O'er souls of men doth only last so long
As I remain invisible to them.
Yet doth the power continue which hath been
From the creation of the worlds mine own.
Now that I can no longer tempt their souls,
My power will cause within their spirit-life
Most beauteous fruits to ripen and endure.

Benedictus (*to Ahriman*) :
Johannes' and Maria's souls have now
Destroyed all error's darkness in themselves ;
And spirit-sight hath been revealed to them.

Ahriman :
I must indeed renounce their spirits then :
For they will turn henceforth unto the light.
Yet one thing hath not yet been ta'en from me ;
With sense-appearance to delight their souls.
And though no longer they will deem it truth,
Yet will they see how truth it doth reveal.
(*Enter the Other Maria.*)

Theodosius (*to the Other Maria*) :
Close intertwinéd was thy destiny
With thine exalted sister's loftier life :
The light of love I could impart to her :
But not the warmth of love, so long as thou
Didst only let thy noble gift arise
From the dim feeling life within thy soul,
And didst not strive to see it clear and bold
In the full light of wisdom's certainty.
The influence of the Temple does not reach
Unto the nature of vague impulses,
E'en though such impulse wills to work for good.

The Other Maria :
I must admit a noble gift of love
Can only work salvation in the light.
So to the temple I now wend my way.
Mine inner feeling shall in future times
Not rob the light of love of its results.

Theodosius :
Through this, thine insight, thou dost give me power
To make Maria's soul-light on the earth
Run smooth and evenly upon its path :
For aye aforetime it must lose its might
In souls, such as thine own was heretofore,
Which would not unify their love with light.

Johannes (*to the Other Maria*) :
I see in thee that nature of the soul,
Which also holdest sway within mine own.
I was unable to find out the way
Which led to thine exalted sister's soul

So long as in my heart the warmth of love
From love's light ever held itself apart.
The sacrifice which to the temple's shrine
Thou bring'st, shall be repeated in my soul.
Therein the warmth of love shall sacrifice
Itself unto love's wonder-working light.

Maria:
Johannes, in the realm of spirit-life
Thou hast attained to knowledge through myself.
To spirit knowledge thou canst only add
True soul-existence, when thou findest too
Thine own soul, as thou didst find mine before.
(*Enter Philia, Astrid, and Luna.*)

Philia:
Then from the whole creation of the worlds
The joy of souls shall be revealed to thee.

Astrid:
From thine whole being then can be outpoured
The light and radiance of the warmth of souls.

Luna:
Then shalt thou dare to live out thine own self,
When such light can illuminate thy soul.
(*Enter Felix and Felicia Balde.*)

Romanus (to Felix Balde):
Long hast thou from the temple held thyself.
Thou only wouldst admit enlightenment,
When light from thine own soul revealed itself.

Men of thy nature rob me of the power
To give my light unto men's souls on earth.
They will but draw from unillumined deeps
The gifts they have to offer in their life.

Felix Balde:
But now at length 'twas even man's illusion
That urged me on from the dark deeps to light,
And let me to the temple find my way.

Romanus:
The fact that thou hast hither found thy way
Gives me the power to give light to the will
Of both Johannes and Maria here.
That it no more may follow forces blind,
But from world-aims henceforth direct itself.

Maria:
Johannes, thou hast seen thine own self now
In spirit in myself. Thou shalt live out
Thine own existence as a spirit, when
The world's light can behold itself in thee.

Johannes (to Felix Balde):
In thee, good brother Felix, I behold
The force of soul which in my spirit too
Hath held the will fast bound. This temple's light
Thou hast at length been ready to approach;
So will I guide my spirit's strength of will
Straight forward to the temple of the soul.

Retardus:
Johannes' and Maria's souls e'en now
Escape from my domain: how then shall they

Discover all that springs forth from my might ?
So long as they did lack within their souls
The fundaments of knowledge they did still
Find joy and pleasure in my gifts, but now
I see myself compelled to let them go.

Felicia :
That man without thine aid may fire himself
To rational thought, that have I shown to thee :
From me a learning streams that shall bear fruit.

Johannes :
This learning shall be wedded to the light,
Which from this temple's source can fill men's souls.

Retardus :
Capesius, my son, thou art now lost.
Thou hast withdrawn thyself from my domain
Before the temple's light can shine for thee.

Benedictus :
He hath begun the path. He feels the light.
And he will win the strength to search and know
In his own soul all that, which up till now
Good Dame Felicia hath produced for him.

Strader :
Then I alone seem lost, for of myself
I cannot cast all doubts from out my heart ;
And surely I shall never find again
The way that doth unto the temple lead.

Theodora :
From out thine heart a glow of light spreads forth ;

A human image is now born therefrom ;
And I can hear the words, which do proceed
From this same human form. E'en thus they sound :
' I have achieved the power to reach the light.'
My friend, trust thou thyself ! These very words,
When thy time is fulfilled, thyself shalt speak.

Curtain

THE SOUL'S PROBATION

EDITORIAL SUMMARY OF THE SCENES.

SCENE 1: Capesius. His occult exercises and his despair.

SCENE 2: Meditation chamber the same as Scenes 3 and 10 of Play 1. Benedictus warns Maria that Johannes must be free. She resolves to look back upon past incarnations.

SCENE 3: Johannes and his painting. Maria resolves not to hinder his freedom by her love.

SCENE 4: As Scene 1. Capesius and Strader.

SCENE 5: Capesius at the Baldes' cottage. Dame Felicia's fable. Johannes and his double.

SCENE 6: The 14th century. The meadows by the Castle of the Mystic Knights. Country folk. The Jew. Thomas confesses to the Monk his love for Keane's daughter.

SCENE 7: Same period. The Interior of the Castle. The Grand Master and Council. The Monk's demand. The apparition of his late Master, Benedictus.

SCENE 8: Same period. Keane has discovered that Thomas and his sweetheart are the children of the First Preceptor and informs the First Preceptor of the fact. The scene closes with a discussion on evolution, and the inspired warning of the Second Master of Ceremonies.

SCENE 9: Same period. The Keanes. Dame Keane's fable. The Country folk. Thomas and Cecilia.

SCENE 10: Scene same as Scene 5. The return to the present day. Explanation of Scenes 6 to 9.

SCENE 11: Meditation chamber as in Scene 2. Maria defeats Ahriman.

SCENE 12: The same. Johannes and Lucifer.

SCENE 13: The Temple of the Sun. Destiny.

PERSONS, FORMS, AND FEATURES

The spiritual and psychic experiences of the characters appearing in this ' Soul's Probation ' are a continuation of the experiences given in the scenes of ' The Portal of Initiation,' and the events related occur several years later.

Benedictus, *Theodosius*, *Romanus* } Hierophants of the Temple of the Sun.

Professor Capesius.

Philia, *Astrid*, *Luna* } The spiritual beings who facilitate the connection between the Soul and the Cosmos. They are not allegorical, but are realities for the spirit Seer.

The Other Philia, The spiritual being who hinders the connection between the Soul and the Cosmos.

The Voice of Conscience, not allegorical, but a reality, for the spirit Seer.

Maria.

Johannes Thomasius.

Doctor Strader.

Felix Balde.

Felicia, his wife.

The ' Double ' of Johannes Thomasius.

Lucifer.

Ahriman.

The events of the Sixth to the Ninth Scenes contain the spiritual vision of Capesius into his former life. Maria and Johannes share the experiences at the same time ; but Strader's former incarnation is only seen by Capesius, Maria, and Johannes.

These scenes back into the fourteenth century are conceived as results of imaginative cognition, and in the physical world are only recognizable by their effect. The way in which these lives are repeated (from occurrences of the fourteenth century into the present day) should not be generalised. This kind of repetition can only happen at a turning point of time.

The Vision of Capesius into the Fourteenth Century

The Spirit of Benedictus.
The Grand Master, chief of a branch of mystic brotherhood.
First Preceptor, of the mystic brotherhood. (A former incarnation of Professor Capesius.)
Second Preceptor, of the mystic brotherhood.
First Master of the Ceremonies, of the mystic brotherhood.
Second Master of the Ceremonies, of the mystic brotherhood.
Simon, the Jew (a former incarnation of Dr. Strader).
Thomas (a former incarnation of Johannes Thomasius).
A Monk (a former incarnation of Maria).
Joseph Keane (a former incarnation of Felix Balde).
His Wife (a former incarnation of Felicia Balde).

Bertha, their daughter (a former incarnation of the Other Maria).
Cecilia, their foster-daughter (a former incarnation of Theodora).
Six Country Men, and
Six Country Women.

NOTE ON THE COSTUMES WORN (see also notes to the " Portal of Initiation "). The knights are in chain armour and dark blue robes of their order, with a white Maltese cross on their mantle and on their tunic. The mantle of the Grand Master is crimson ; his tunic is white with a red cross. Their blue caps and the Grand Master's red cap are flat and triangular. The apparition of Benedictus in Scene 7, is in pink peach blossom colour. He appears in the background about nine feet above the stage and remains rigid with his arms extended in cross fashion the whole time of his appearance in this scene.

THE SOUL'S PROBATION

Scene I

The library and study of Capesius. Prevailing colour brown. Evening. First Capesius, then the Spirit-Forms who are powers of soul ; later Benedictus.

Capesius (*reading in a book*) :
' By inward gazing on the Beingless,
And dreaming through the shadowy picture realm
Of thought, conformably to self-made laws :—
Thus erring human nature often seeks
To find the meaning and the goal of life :
The soul from its own depths would draw replies
To questions that concern the universe.
Yet such attempts are vain, illusory
E'en at the outset, and they lead at last
To feeble visions which destroy themselves.'
(*Speaking as follows.*)
Thus is portrayed in words of import grave
Through Benedictus' noble spirit-sight,
The inward life of many human souls.
Each phrase goes home destructive to my heart—
Unfolding truly mine own way and life
Until this day, with cruel vividness.
And should a god this very hour appear
Descending on me in a raging storm

And clad in wrath, yet could his threatening might
Not torture me with more appalling fears
Than do the Master's words, as strong as fate.
Long hath my life been, but its web displays
Nothing but pictures shadowy and dim
Which haunt my dreaming soul and fondly strive
To mirror truths of nature and of mind.
With this dream-fabric hath my thought essayed
To solve the riddles of the universe.
Down many a path my restless soul I turned.
Yet do I clearly see that I myself,
Was not the active master of my soul
When threads of thought along illusion's path
Spun themselves out to cosmic distances.

So that which I in my content beheld
In pictures, left me empty, led to naught.
Then came across my path Thomasius,
The youthful painter. He indeed strode on,
Upheld by truest energies of soul
To that exalted spiritual way
Which transforms human life, and makes to rise
From hidden gulfs of soul the energy
Which feeds the springs of life within ourselves.
That which awoke from out his inmost soul
Abides in every man. And since from him
I gained this revelation, I do count
As chief amongst the many sins of life
To let the spirit's treasure grow corrupt.

I know henceforth that I must search and seek
And nevermore allow myself to doubt.

In days gone by my vanity of thought
Could have enticed me to the false belief
That unto knowledge man aspires in vain ;
And only failure and despair belong
To those who would lay bare the springs of life.

And were all wisdom to unite in this,
And were I powerless to reject the claim
That human destiny demands of man
That he shall lose his individual self
And sink into the gulf of nothingness,
Yet would I make the venture unafraid.

Such thoughts would be a sacrilege to-day,
Since I have learned I cannot win repose
Until the spirit treasure in my soul
Hath been unveiléd to the light of day.

The fruits of work of lofty spirit-beings
Have been implanted in the human soul,
And whoso leaves the spirit seed to lie
Unheeded and decay, he brings to naught
The work divine committed unto man.
Thus do I recognize life's highest task ;
Yet when I try to take one single step
Across the threshold that I dare not shun,
I feel my strength desert me, which of yore
Did pride itself on elevated thought,
And sought the goals of life in time and space.
Once did I reckon it an easy thing
To set the brain in action and to grasp
The nature of reality by thought.
But now, when I would search the fount of life

And comprehend it as in truth it is,
My thought appears as some blunt instrument;
I have no power, no matter how I strive,
To form a clear thought-image from the words
Of Benedictus, though his earnest speech
Should now direct me to the spirit's path.

(*Resuming his reading.*)

'In silence sound the depths of thine own soul,
And ever let strong courage be thy guide.
Thy former ways of thinking cast away
What time thou dost withdraw into thyself;
For only when thine own light is put out
Will spirit-radiance show itself to thee.'

(*Resuming his soliloquy.*)

It seems as though I could not draw my breath
When I attempt to understand these words.
And ere I feel the thoughts that I must think,
Fear and misgiving have beset my soul.
It is borne in on me that everything
Which hitherto was my environment
Is crumbling into ruin, and therewith
I too am crumbling into nothingness.
An hundred times at least have I perused
The words which follow, and each several time
Darkness enfolds me deeper than before.

(*Resuming his reading.*)

'Within thy thinking cosmic thought doth live,
Within thy feeling cosmic forces play,
Within thy will do cosmic beings work;
Abandon thou thyself to cosmic thought,
Experience thyself through cosmic force,
Create thyself anew from cosmic will.

End not at last in cosmic distances
By fantasies of dreamy thought beguiled.
Do thou begin in farthest spirit-realms
And end in the recesses of thy soul.
The plan divine then shalt thou recognize
When thou hast realized thy Self in thee.'

(*Becomes entranced by a vision, then comes to himself and speaks.*)

What was this ?

(*Three Figures, representing soul-forces, float round him.*)

Luna :

Abundant power is thine
For lofty spirit-flight ;
Its sure foundation rests
Upon the human will.
Its temper hath been tried
By sure and certain hope.
It hath grown strong as steel
By sight of future times.
Thou dost but courage lack
To pour into thy will
Thy confidence in life.
Into the vast Unknown
Dare but to venture forth !

Astrid :

From cosmic distances
And from the sun's glad light,
From utmost realms of stars
And magic might of worlds,

From heaven's ethereal blue
And spirit's lofty power,
Win mightiness of soul;
And send its radiant beams
Deep down within thine heart;
That knowledge glowing warm
May thus be born in thee.

The Other Philia:
They are deceiving thee
This evil sisterhood;
They seek but to ensnare
By trickery and guile.
Thy gifts so seeming fair
Which they have offered thee
Will vanish into air
When thou wouldst hold them fast
With all thy human strength.
They lead thee on to worlds
Inhabited by gods,
Where thou wilt be destroyed
If thou mak'st bold to rise
Into their cosmic realm
With thy humanity.

Capesius:
It was quite plain that here some beings spake—
And yet it is most sure that no one else—
Beside myself—is present in this place.

So have I but held converse with myself
And yet that too seems quite impossible—

For ne'er could I imagine such discourse
As here I listened to—

Am I still he
I was before?

(*From his gestures it is plain he feels unable to reply 'yes.'*)

Oh! I am—I am not.

The Spirit-Voice of Conscience:
Thy thoughts do now descend
To depths of human life
And what as soul doth compass thee around
And what as spirit is enchained in thee,
Expands in cosmic depth,
From whose fulness quaffing
Mankind doth live in thought;
From whose fulness living
Mankind illusion weaves.

Capesius:
Enough . . . Enough . . . Where is Capesius?
You I implore . . . ye forces all unknown . . .
Where is Capesius? Where is . . . myself?

(*Once more he relapses into a reverie.*)

(*Enter Benedictus. Capesius does not notice him at first. Benedictus touches him on the shoulder.*)

Benedictus:
I learned that thou didst wish to speak with me,
And so I came to seek thee in thy home.

Capesius:
Right good it is of thee to grant my wish.
Yet it had scarce been possible that thou
Shouldst find me in worse case than now I am.
That I am not this moment on the ground
Prostrate before thy feet, after such pain
As even now hath racked my soul, I owe
To thy kind glance alone which sought mine own,
So soon as thou didst with thy gentle touch
Arouse me from the horrors of my dream.

Benedictus:
I am aware that I have found thee now
Fighting a battle for thy very life.
Since I have known full well this long time past
That thus it was appointed us to meet.
Prepare to change the sense of many words
If thou wouldst understand my speech aright,
And do not marvel that thy present pain
Bears in my language quite another name—
I call thy state good fortune.

Capesius:
Then indeed
Thou dost but heap the measure of the woe
Which casts me into gloom's abysmal deeps.
Just now I felt as if my real self
Had flown afar to cosmic distances,
And unfamiliar beings through its sheaths
Were speaking here. But this I took to be
Hallucination, spirit mockery,
And mourned that thus my soul could be deceived:

This thought alone kept me from breaking down.
Take not away my right thus to believe,
The only prop I lean on ; tell me not
My fevered dreaming was good fortune ; else
I shall be lost indeed.

Benedictus :

A man can lose
Nought else but that which keeps him separate
From cosmic being. When he seems to lose
That which in dreamy fantasies of thought
He misapplied to labours purposeless,
Then let him seek for what has gone from him.
For he will surely find it, and withal
The proper use to which it should be put
In human life. Mere words of comfort now
Were nothing more than clever play on words.

Capesius :

Nay—teachings that by intellect alone
Are comprehended, thou dost not impart.
Bitter experience has shown me this.
Like deeds which lead one on to lofty heights
And also cast one to abysmal depth,
Thy counsels pour a stream of fiery life
And also deathly chill into men's souls.
They work at once e'en as the nod of fate
And also as the storms of life and love.
Much had I sought and thought in earlier days
Before I met thee ; yet the spirit's powers,
Creative and destructive, I have learned
Only since I have followed in thy steps.

The turmoil and confusion of my soul,
Caused by thy words, was evident when thou
Didst come within my chamber. Oft I felt
Much pain whilst reading in thy book of life,
Until to-day my cup of woe was full.
And so my agony of soul o'erflowed,
Spilled by thy fateful words. Their meaning swept
O'er all my soul unrecognized, and yet
Like some elixir they revived my heart.
In such wise wrought they in the magic worlds
That all my clarity of sense was lost.
Then ghostly phantoms made a mock of me,
And words of import dark I seemed to hear
Issue from my distraught tormented soul.
I know that all the secrets thou dost guard
For human souls may not be written down,
But that the answer to men's doubts may be
Revealed to each according to his need.
So grant me that of which I stand in need ;
For verily I must indeed be told
What robbed me of my senses and my wits
And compassed me with magic's airy spells.

Benedictus :
Another meaning hides within my words
Than that of the ideas which they convey ;
They guide the natural forces of the soul
To spirit-verities ; their inward sense
Cannot be understood until the day
On which they waken vision in the soul
That yields itself to their compelling power.
They are not fruitage of mine own research ;

But spirits have entrusted them to me,
Spirits well skilled to read the signs in which
The Karma of the world doth stand revealed.
The special virtue of these words is this,
Unto the source of knowledge they can guide.
Yet none the less it must be each man's task,
Who understands them in their truest sense,
To drink the spirit-waters from that source.
Nor are my words designed to hinder thee
From being swept away to worlds that seem
To thee fantastic. Thou hast seen a realm
Which must remain illusion just as long
As thou dost lose thyself on entering it.
But wisdom's outer portal will be found
Unsealed to thine advancing soul so soon
As thou dost near it with self-consciousness.

Capesius:
And how can I maintain self-consciousness?

Benedictus:
The answer to this riddle thou shalt find
When, with awakened inner eye, thou dost
Perceive before thee many wondrous things,
Which shortly will be found to cross thy path.
Know that a test hath been ordained for thee
By lords of fate and by the spirit-powers.

(*Exit.*)

Capesius:
Although their meaning is not clear to me
I feel his words at work within myself.

He hath appointed me a goal ; and I
Am ready to obey. He doth not ask
For stress of thought ; it seems that he desires
I should press forward with exploring feet
To find the spirit-verities myself.

I cannot tell how he was sent to me ;
And yet his actions have compelled my trust ;
He hath restored me to myself once more.
So though at present I may not divine
The nature of the spell that shook me so,
I will not shrink from facing these events
Which his prophetic vision hath foretold.

Curtain whilst Capesius remains standing

Scene 2

A meditation chamber. Prevailing colour violet. Serious, but not gloomy atmosphere.

Benedictus, Maria, then the Spirit-Figures representing soul-powers.

Maria:

Great conflicts in my soul bid me invoke
Wise counsel from my master in this hour.
Gloomy forebodings rise within my heart.
And I am powerless to withstand the thoughts
That overwhelm me ever and again.
They pierce me to my being's inmost core;
They seek to lay upon me a command
Which to obey doth seem like sacrilege.
Deceitful powers must be obsessing me;
Oh, I implore thee—lend me aid . . . that I
May exorcise them.

Benedictus:

Never shalt thou lack
What thou dost need of me at any time.

Maria:

I know how closely to my soul are knit
Johannes' life and aims. A stony road

Of fate brought us together ; and God's will
Hath hallowed in high spirit-realms our bond.
All this stands out before me e'en as clear
As only truth itself can be. And yet—
Horror o'erpowers me that these lips of mine
Must utterance give to sacrilegious words—
And yet—deep in my soul I hear a voice
Which tells me plainly and repeatedly
Despite my utmost will to fight it down :
' Thou must give up Johannes, let him go.
No longer mayst thou keep him at thy side
If thou wouldst not work evil to his soul.
Alone he must proceed along the road
On which he travels to his longed for goal.'
I know that if thou dost but speak the word
This lying dream will cease to haunt my soul.

Benedictus :
Maria, noble grief leads thee astray
To see the truth, yet call it counterfeit.

Maria :
What I have seen—is truth . . . It cannot be !
Between my master's utterance and mine ear
Delusion steals. O speak to me again.

Benedictus :
What I have spoken, thou hast heard aright :
Thy love is noble, and Johannes stands
Close-knit to thee. But love must not forget
That she is wisdom's sister. Long indeed
For his salvation hath Johannes been
With thee united. Now his soul demands,

For its own progress, freedom to pursue
Its aims unhindered. Fate doth not decree
That ye shall be no longer outward friends;
But this it doth demand with strict decree—
Johannes' freedom in the spirit-realm.

Maria:
Still do I hear delusion: so let me
Alone continue speaking, for I know
That thou must understand me without fail.
For sure it is no lying shape will dare
To change the words unto thine ear addressed.
My host of doubts were easily dispersed
If earth-life's tortuous course alone it were
That knits Johannes' soul unto mine own.
But to our bond was lofty sanction given
Which knits soul unto soul eternally.
And spirit-powers did speak with blessings meet
The word that bans all doubts for evermore:
'He hath won truth within th' eternal realms
Because in worlds of sense his inmost self
Already was united with thine own.'
What can this revelation mean to me
If now its very opposite is true?

Benedictus:
Thou hast to learn that even one to whom
There hath been much revealed, may yet be found
Lacking perfection still in divers ways.
Tangled the paths that lead to higher truths:
And only those may hope to reach the goal
Who walk in patience through their labyrinth.

Thou didst but see one part of what is real
In that great realm of everlasting light,
When with thine inner vision thou didst gaze
Upon a picture of the spirit-land.
Not yet hast thou seen full reality.
Johannes' soul is knit unto thine own
By earthly ties of such complexity,
That it may be allotted unto each
To find his way into the spirit-realm
Through forces borrowed from the other one.
But nothing hitherto hath clearly shown
That ye have conquered each and every test.
To see a picture hath been granted you
Of what the future holds for you in store
When ye can pass unscathed the full ordeal.
That ye have seen the ultimate reward
Of unremitting effort is no sign
That ye have reached the end of all your strife.
Ye have beheld a picture, which your will
Alone can turn unto reality.

Maria:
Although thy words just spoken fall on me
Like bitter pain that follows hours of bliss,
There is at least one lesson I have learned,
Which is to bow my head to wisdom's light
When it doth prove itself through inward force.
Already something is becoming clear
Which up till now lay hidden in my heart.
But when in highest bliss delusion's snare
Doth wear the mask of truth to human minds,
Darkness of soul is difficult to ban.

I need still more than that which thou hast given
To plumb the depth of meaning in thy words.
Thou once didst lead myself to those soul-depths
Wherein a light was then vouchsafed to me
By which I could behold the lives I spent
In previous incarnations long ago.
Thus was it granted me to learn the way
In which my soul was linked unto my friend's.
My act of bringing, in those days of old,
Johannes' soul unto the spirit-fount
I felt and recognized to be the seed
Which grew and bore such cherished friendship's fruit,
As was found ripe for all eternity.

Benedictus:
Thou wast accounted worthy to retrace
Thy path on earth in days long since gone by.
But thou must not forget to look and see
If thou canst be assured with certainty
That of thy past lives none concealed doth stay
When backward thou dost turn thy spirit's eye.

Maria (after a pause betokening deep reflection):
How could I be so blinded, so misled?
The rapture which I felt on looking back
Over a period of bygone times
Deluded me to vain forgetfulness
Of manifold shortcomings. Not till now
Did I foresee that I must turn my gaze
Into the darkness ere I comprehend
The road that leads back from this present life

To olden days when my friend's soul sought mine.
To thee, my master, will I make my vow
Henceforth to bridle my soul's arrogance . . . !
Now for the first time do I realize
How pride of knowledge leads the soul astray ;
So that, instead of its imbibing strength
From freely offered stores of spirit-wealth,
It misapplies the gift in wanton use
And only holds the mirror up to self.
I know at last from my heart's warning call,
To which thy words lend added power, how far
I am to-day e'en from the nearest goal.
No more will I be overswift to read
A meaning into words from spirit-lands.
I will esteem them power wherewith my soul
May shape its course—, not as some message sent
To free me from the need of finding out
The goal of action in my daily life.
Had I paid earlier heed unto this truth
And gone my way in due humility,
I had not failed to see that only then
When he decides to tread a path not traced
By me beforehand, can my friend unfold
To fullest bloom his richly-gifted soul.
And now that this is clear I shall not fail
In finding strength sufficient to fulfil
What love and duty may require of me.
Yet do I feel assured this very hour
More clearly than I ever was before
That some grave testing of my soul draws nigh.
For mostly, when men tear from out their hearts
That of themselves which in another lives,

Love hath been changed into its opposite.
Themselves they change the ties that coupled them,
Yet passion's impulse gives to them the power.
Whilst I must of mine own free will uproot
The workings of my soul's life, which I saw
Accomplishing themselves in my friend's acts ;
And still unchanging must my love abide.

Benedictus :
If thou wouldst steer thy course direct, thou must
Become aware of what thou most didst prize
In this thy love. For once thou knowst the force
That leads thee all unknown within thy soul,
Thou wilt find power to do what duty bids.

Maria :
By saying this thou giv'st e'en now that aid
Of which my soul so sorely stands in need.
I must investigate mine inmost self
With earnest questionings : and so I ask,
What potent cause impels me in my love ?
I see my own soul's life and strength at work
In my friend's nature and activities.
So that which I desire to satisfy
Is nothing but the hunger of myself,
Which I, deluded, call unselfishness.
Thus it hath been concealed from me till now
That in my friend I mirror but myself.
It was the dragon Selfishness who veiled
The truth from me in wrappings of deceit.
And selfishness can take an hundred forms :—
I see it clearly now. And when one thinks

The enemy subdued, behold him rise
Out of defeat and stronger than before.
Moreover 'tis a foe with added skill
To hide the truth with cloak of counterfeit.
(*Maria sinks into deep thought.*)

(*The three Spirit-Figures of the soul-powers appear.*)

Maria:
O ye my sisters, whom
I find in Being's depths,
Whene'er my soul expands
And guides itself within
The cosmic distances:
The powers of sight for me
From ether's heights release
And lead to earthly paths
That I may know myself
As I exist in Time
And may direct my course
From out old ways of life
Unto new spheres of Will.

Philia:
I will myself imbue
With soul's aspiring light
From my heart's inmost depths:
I will breathe deep within
Will's might that giveth life
From out the spirit powers:

Dear sister, that thou may'st
Experience the Light
In thine old ways of life.

Astrid :
I will weave self-hood in
All conscious of itself
With Love's submissive will ;
I will release forthwith
The budding powers of Will
From fetters of desire
And change thy yearning weak
To spirit certainty ;
Dear Sister, that thou may'st
In distant paths on earth
Unravel thine own self.

Luna :
The self-denying powers
Of heart will I call forth,
And will make hard and fast
Enduring soul-repose ;
Then shall they wed, and raise
The powerful spirit light
From out the depths of soul.
They shall impenetrate,
And force Earth's bounds to heed
The listening spirit' ear ;
Dear Sister, that thou may'st
Find in Time's vast expanse
The traces of thy life.

Maria:
If I could only tear
My 'wildered self away
And give myself to you
That ye from cosmic space
Might thus reflect my soul;
Then could I loose myself
From out this sphere of life
And find myself again
In other states of being.

(*Long pause, then the following:*)

In you, my sisters, I see spirit-beings
Quickening the souls of men from cosmic founts,
Ye bring to fruitage in the self of man
The seedling forces from eternity.
Through my soul's gates oft have I found the way
Into your kingdom, and have there beheld
The primal shaping of this earthly globe
With inner vision. Now your help I crave
Since I am bidden to retrace the way
That stretches back far from my present life
To long past ages of humanity.
Release my soul from consciousness of self
In time-enclosed existence, and reveal
The duties laid on me by former lives.

A Spirit-voice,—the spiritual conscience:
Her thoughts are seeking now
For clues in Time's vast space.
What as debt she still doth owe,
What as duty is imposed,

Arise from out her inmost depths of soul,
From whose deepness dreaming
Mankind doth guide his life,
In whose deepness straying
Mankind himself doth lose.

Curtain falls; everybody still standing on the stage

Scene 3

A room whose prevailing tint is rose-red; cheerful atmosphere.

Johannes at an easel; Maria enters later; finally the Spirit-Figures representing soul-powers.

Johannes:

Maria, when she saw my picture last,
Stood silent. Heretofore she ever gave
Hints to assist the progress of my work
From her rich store of wisdom manifold.
Little as I can trust myself to judge
Whether my art indeed accomplishes
The task our spirit-current hath imposed,
Yet is my confidence in her complete.
And ever through my spirit ring her words
Which lent me strength and brought me happiness
When I took courage and began this work.
'In such a way as this,' she said, 'thou canst
Attempt this enterprise, and so reveal
Thy spirit's visions unto earthly eyes.
Thou wilt not fail to recognize how forms,
Fashioned like thoughts, shape matter to their will;
Nor yet how colour, to desire akin,
Doth fill thy vital energy with warmth.
In such wise canst thou even represent

On canvas through thy skill the higher realms.'
I feel the power that dwells within these words
And diffidently yield to that belief
That I am drawing nearer to the goal
Which Benedictus hath appointed me.
Full oft I sat discouraged at my work ;
It seemed at one time so presumptuous,
And at another so impossible
To represent in colour and in form
The visions that are granted to my soul.
How can the ceaseless web of spirit-life,
Which is revealed to inner sight alone
And is so far withdrawn from outward sense,
Be manifest in matter which is drawn,
As drawn it must be, from the realm of sense ?
This question have I asked myself full oft.
Yet when I banish personality,
And follow spirit-teaching faithfully,
And feel myself caught up in blessedness
Unto creative forces of the worlds,
At once belief awakens in an art
As true and mystic as our spirit-quest.
I learned to live with light, and recognize
In colour's power the action of that light,
As faithful students of true mystic lore
See in realms reft of colour and of form
The spirit's deeds and soul's reality.
Relying on this spirit-light, I won
This power to feel in flowing sea of light,
And live within the stream of glowing tints ;
And sense those spirit-forces which maintain
Their might in non-material webs of light,

And radiant colours filled with spirit-life.
(*Enter Maria, unobserved by Johannes.*)
And when my courage faileth me, once more
Of thee, my friend most noble, do I think.
At thy soul's fire my love of work is warmed ;
Thy spirit-light awakes my faith anew.
(*He sees Maria.*)
Oh, thou art here. . . . Impatiently I craved
Thy coming, yet I marked not thine approach !

Maria :
I must rejoice to find my friend so wrapt
In work as to forget his friend herself.

Johannes :
Nay, speak not thus, since thou dost know full well
That I cannot create one single thought
Which hath not first been hallowed by thine aid.
No work of mine owes not its life to thee.
Through thy love's fire have I been purified ;
Through thee my art hath learned to represent
The beauty of the truths revealed to thee,
Which warm my heart, illuminate my sense,
And clothe in radiant light the spirit-world.
The current of my work must take its rise
From thy soul's spring and flow thence into mine,
Ere I can feel the wings that lift me up
To lofty heights of spirit, far from earth.
I love the life that quickens in thy soul,
And, loving it, can give it form and hue.
Love only can beget artistic power
And make an artist's work bear fruit and live.

If I, as artist, am to carry back
Pictures of spirit to the world of sense,
Then cosmic spirit must speak forth through me,
My personality be but its tool.
First must I burst the bonds of selfishness
Ere I can know that I shall not mistake
For spirit-worlds my own vain fantasies.

Maria :
And if thou hadst to seek through thine own sight
And not through mine the true course of thy work,
It may well be that, coming from one soul
Thy beauty's being might be unified.

Johannes :
I should be spinning webs of idle thought
In speculating which I should prefer :
Whether to incarnate thy spirit-sight,
Or in myself to seek my vision's source.—
I am convinced I could not find it thus.

I can withdraw to deep retreats of soul
And find delight in wide-flung spirit-worlds :
I can pour out my soul in worlds of sense
And follow colour-wonders with mine eye
And watch creative energies at work,
If I am left with mine own soul alone.
Whate'er may thus befall me I am not
Thereby impelled to my creative art.
But if I follow thee to cosmic heights,
And in warm rapture live again what thou
Already hast in spirit there beheld,
I feel a fire in thy spirit sight

Which burns on in me also, and whose flames
Kindle the powers that drive me to my work.

If my desire were simply to relate
That which I can find in higher worlds,
Then with my soul I well might upward soar
To spheres where spirit unto spirit speaks.
But as an artist I must find that fire
Which lights the picture and inflames the heart.
And my soul cannot to my picture give
The magic warmth that streams through human hearts,
Till it can quench its thirst with spirit-truths
Revealed from out the depths of thine own heart.

How primal force by longing is condensed,
How powers creative blaze with spirit-light,
And, sensing even then their need of man,
Display themselves as gods in earliest times.
All this, my friend, thy soul in noble speech
Hath often led me on to learn unseen.
In hues ethereal of the spirit-world
I sought to densify what hid from sight;
And felt how colours longed to see themselves
Mirrored as spirit in the souls of men.
So doth my friend's soul speak as it 'twere mine
Out of my pictures to the human heart.

Maria:
Bethink, Johannes, how the One Soul must—
A personality apart from all—
Evolve from out the womb of time.
Love serves to knit together separate souls

Not kill their individuality.
The moment is upon us, when we twain
Must test our souls, and find the spirit-path
That each must follow for its separate good.
(*Exit.*)

Johannes:
What meant my friend? Her words did sound so strange.
Maria, I must follow thee forthwith.
(*The three Spirit-Figures of the soul-powers appear with the Other Philia.*)

Luna:
Thou canst not find thyself
Portrayed in other souls.
The power of thine own self
Must root in cosmic soil,
If from the spirit-heights
Thou wouldst indeed transplant
Their beauty to earth's depths.
Be bold to be thyself,
That thou, strong souled, mayst give
Thyself to cosmic powers—a willing sacrifice.

Astrid:
In all thy ways on earth
Thou must not lose thyself;
Mankind doth not attain
To sun-kissed distances
If he would rob himself of personality.
So then prepare thyself,
Press on through earthly love

To utmost depths of heart
Which ripen cosmic love.

The Other Philia:
O heed the sisters not;
They lead thee far astray
To cosmic distances,
And rob thee of earth's touch.
They do not understand
That earthly love bears trace
Of cosmic love itself.
In cold their natures dwell
And warmth flies from their powers.
They fain would lure mankind
From out his own soul depths
To cold and lofty worlds.

Curtain: Johannes, Philia, Astrid, Luna, and the Other Philia still standing

Scene 4

The same room as in Scene 1. Capesius and Strader.

Capesius (to Strader who is entering):
A hearty welcome to the friend whose tongue
With many a disputatious argument
Stoutly withstood me! 'Tis long time since
Thou crossed this threshold. Yet in earlier days
Thou wast my constant welcome visitor.

Strader:
Alas I have not had the time to spare;
My life hath undergone a curious change.
No longer do I plague my weary brain
With hopeless problems. Now I dedicate
The knowledge I have won to honest work,
Such as may serve some useful end in life.

Capesius:
Thou meanest, thou hast given up thy quest?

Strader:
Say rather, that it hath abandoned me.

Capesius:
And what may be thy present labours' goal?

Strader :
There are no goals in life ordained for man
Which he may see and clearly understand.
It is a mighty engine by whose wheels
We are caught up and wearied, and cast out
Into the darkness when our strength is spent.

Capesius :
I knew thee in the days when eagerly
And undismayed thou didst set out to solve
The riddles of existence. I have learned
How thou didst see thy treasured knowledge sink
Into the bottomless abyss, and how
Thy soul, profoundly shaken, had to drain
The bitter cup of disappointed dreams.
But never for one moment did I think
That thou couldst drive the impulse from thy heart
Which had become so fully master there.

Strader :
Thou hast but to recall a certain day
On which a seeress by her truthful speech
Made clear to me the error of my ways.
I had no choice but to acknowledge then
That thought, however hard it toil and strive,
Can never reach the fountain-head of life.
For thought cannot do otherwise than err,
If it be so that highest wisdom's light
Can be revealed to that dark power of soul
Of which that woman showed herself possessed.
The rules of science cannot ever lead
To such a revelation ; that is plain.

Had this been all, and had I only met
This one defeat whilst following my quest,
I do believe I could have brought myself
To start afresh by striving to unite
My methods with those other different ones.
But when I saw how some strange spirit cult—
Born of hallucinations as I deemed—
Impotence into creative strength could change,
Hope disappeared, and left me in despair.

Dost thou recall the artist, that young man
We both encountered whilst he was engrossed
Following the dubious course of spirit-ways ?
After such buffetings from fate I lived
For many weeks benumbed, to madness nigh.
And when by nature's aid I was at last
Restored to sense, I made a firm resolve
To meddle with such seeking never more.
Long, long it was before I had regained
My body's health ; and 'twas a joyless time.
I made myself proficient in those things
That lead to business and to normal life.
So now I am a factory manager,
Where screws are made. This is the work I thank
For many hours in which I can forget
My bitter sufferings in a futile quest.

Capesius :
I must confess I scarce can recognize
My friend of former days ; so different
Is now the guise in which he shows himself.

Beside those hours of which thou spak'st just now
Were there not others full of storm and stress,
In which the ancient conflicts were renewed
That urged thee forth from this benumbing life?

Strader:
I am not spared those hours in mine own soul
When impotence 'gainst impotence doth strive.
And fate hath not so willed it in my case
That rosy beams of hope should force their way
Into my heart, and leave assurance there
That this my present life is not an utter loss.
Renunciation is henceforth my goal.
Yet may the force which such a task requires
Endow me later on with faculty
To follow up my quest in other ways—
(*Aside.*)
If this terrestrial life repeats itself.

Capesius:
Thou spak'st,—if I indeed have heard aright,—
Of repetition of thy life on earth.
Then hast thou really won this fateful truth,
Found it on spirit-journeys, which to-day
Thou none the less condemnst as dubious?

Strader:
This was the third thing—thou hast spoken it
That finally did strengthen my resolve
To make a fresh beginning in my life.
I sought upon my sick-bed once for all
In comprehensive survey to embrace

The field of knowledge traversed by myself.
And this I did, ere seeking other aims.
I must have asked myself an hundred times
What we can learn from nature, and infer
From what we know at present of her laws.
I could not find a loophole for escape.
The repetition of our earthly life
Cannot and must not be denied by thought
That doth not wish to tear itself away
From all research hath found for ages past.

Capesius :
Could I have had one such experience
Then should I have been spared much bitter pain.
I sought through many a weary wakeful night
For liberating thoughts to set me free.

Strader :
And yet it was this spirit lightning-flash
Which robbed me of my last remaining powers.
The strongest impulse of my soul hath been
Ever to seek for evidence in life
Of what my thought hath forced on me as truth.
So it befell, as if by chance, that I
E'en in those days of misery should prove,
And by my own life testify the truth,
That cruel truth with all that it involves :
Which is, that all our sorrows and our joys
Are but results of what we really are.
Aye ! this is often very hard to bear.

Capesius :
Incredible seems such experience.

What can there be to overshadow truth,
For which we search unwearying, and which
Unto our spirit firm assurance gives!

Strader:
For thee it may be so, but not for me.
Thou art acquainted with my curious life.
By chance it seemed my parents' plans were crossed,—
Their purpose was to make a monk of me;
And naught so hurt them, they have often said,
In all their life as my apostasy.
I bore all this, yea and much more besides;
Just as one bears the other things in life
So long as birth and death appear the bounds
Appointed for our earthly pilgrimage.
So too my later life and all the hopes
That came to naught, to me a picture seemed
That only by itself could be explained.
Would that the day had never dawned, on which
I altered those convictions that I held,
For—bear in mind—I have not yet confessed
The total burden laid on me by fate.
No child was I of those who would have made
A monk of me, but an adopted son
Chosen by them when but a few days old.
My own real parents I have never known,
But was a stranger in my very home.
Nor less estranged have I remained from all
That happened round me in my later life.
And now my thought compels me to look back
Unto those days of long ago, and see
How from the world I stole myself away.

For thought is linked with thought to make a chain :
A man to whom it hath been thus ordained
To be a stranger in the world, before
His consciousness had ever dawned in him,
This man hath willed this fate upon himself
Ere he could will as consequence of thought.
And since I stay that which I was at first,
I know without the shadow of a doubt
That all unknowing I am in the power
Of forces that control my destiny,
And that will not reveal themselves to me.
Do I need more to give me cruel proof
How many veils enshroud mine inmost self ?
Without false thirst for knowledge, judge this now ;
Hath my new truth revealed the light to me ?
It hath, at any rate, brought certainty
That I in mine uncertainty must stay.
Thus it portrays to me my destiny
And like in its own way, is my reply,
Half anguish and half bitter mockery.
A fearful sense of horror on me grew.
Tortured by scorn I must confront my life ;
And scoffing at the mockery of fate
I yielded to the darkness. Yet there stayed
One single thought which I could realize :
Do with me what thou wilt, thou life-machine ;
I am not curious how thy cog-wheels work !

Capesius :
The man whom I have recognized in thee
In such condition cannot long remain
Bereft of Knowledge, even if he would.

Already I can see the days approach
When we shall both be other than we are.

The curtain falls, leaving them standing opposite one another

Scene 5

A mountain glade, in which is situated Felix Balde's solitary cottage. Evening. Dame Felicia Balde, Capesius, then Felix Balde; later on Johannes and his Double; afterwards Lucifer and Ahriman. Dame Felicia is seated on a bench in front of her cottage.

Capesius (*arriving, approaches her*) :
I know an old friend will not ask in vain
For leave to stay and rest awhile with thee ;
Since now, e'en more than any former time,
He needs what in thine house so oft he found.

Felicia :
When thou wast still far off, thy wearied step
Told me the tale which now thine eyes repeat ;
That sorrow dwelleth in thy soul to-day.

Capesius (*who has seated himself*) :
Even aforetime 'twas not granted me
To bring much merriment into thy home ;
But special patience must I crave to-day
When, heavy-hearted and of peace bereft,
I force my way unto the home of peace.

Felicia :
We were right glad to see thee in the days
When scarce another man came near this house.

And thou art still our friend, despite events
That came between us, e'en though many now
Are glad to seek us in this lonely glade.

Capesius:
The tale is true then which hath reached mine ears,
That thy dear Felix, so reserved of yore,
Is nowadays a man much visited?

Felicia:
'Tis so; good Felix used to shut us off
From everyone—; but now the people throng
To question him, and he must answer them.
His duty bids him lead this novel life.
In former days he cared not to impart,
Save to his inner self, the secret lore
Concerning spirit-deeds and nature's powers
By rock and forest unto him revealed.
Nor did men seem to value it before.
How great a change hath now come o'er the times!
To many men lending a willing ear
To what they counted folly in the past,
Greedy for wisdom, Felix can reveal.
And when my dear good husband has to talk
(*Felix Balde comes out of the house.*)
Hour upon hour on end, as oft he doth,
I long for those old days of which I spake.
How oft would Felix earnestly declare
That in the quiet heart enshrined, the soul
Must learn to treasure up the spirit-gifts
From worlds divine in mercy sent to her.
He held it treachery to that high speech

Of spirit, to reveal it to an ear
That was but open to the world of sense.

Felix :
Felicia cannot reconcile herself
To this much altered fashion of our life.
As she regrets the loneliness of old,
So she deplores the many days that pass
In which we have but few hours for ourselves.

Capesius :
What made thee strangers welcome to a house
That shut them out so sternly heretofore ?

Felix :
The spirit-voice which speaks within my heart
Bade me of yore be silent ; I obeyed.
Now that it bids me speak I show myself
Equally faithful unto its command.
Our human nature undergoes a change
As earth's existence gradually evolves.
Now are we very near an epoch's close ;
And spirit-knowledge therefore must in part
Be now revealéd unto every man
Who chooseth to receive it to himself.
I know how little what I have to tell
Is in agreement with man's current thought ;
The spirit-life, they say, must be made known,
In strict and logical thought sequences,
And men deny all logic to my words.
True science on a firm foundation based,
Cannot, they say, regard me otherwise
Than as a visionary soul who seeks

A solitary road to wisdom's seat,
And knows no more of science than of art.
Yet not a few declare it worth their while
The tangle of my language to explore,
Because therein from time to time is found
Something of worth, to reason not opposed.
I am a man into whose heart must flow,
Untouched by art, each vision he may see.
Nought know I of a knowledge lacking words.
When I retreat within mine inmost heart
And also when I list to nature's voice,
Then such a knowledge wakes to life in me
As hath no need to seek for any words ;
Speech is to it as intimately linked
As is his body's sheath to man on earth ;
And knowledge such as this, which in this wise
Reveals itself to us from spirit-worlds,
Can be of service even unto those
Who understand it not. And so it is
That every man is free to come to me
Who will attend to what I have to say.
Many are led by curiosity
And other trivial reasons to my door.
I know that this is so, but also know
That though the souls of just such men as these
Are not this moment living for the light,
Yet in them have been planted seeds of good
Which will not fail to ripen in due time.

Capesius :
Let me, I pray thee, freely speak my mind.
I have admired thee now these many years ;

Yet up till now I have not grasped the sense
Which underlies thy strange mysterious words.

Felix :
It surely will unfold itself to thee ;
For with a lofty spirit dost thou strive—
And noble heart, and so the time must come
When thou thyself shalt hear the voice of truth.
Thou dost not mark how full of rich content
Man, as the image of the cosmos, is:
His head doth mirror heaven's very self :
The spirits of the spheres work through his limbs :
And in his breast earth-beings hold their sway.
To all of these opposed, in all their might
Appear the demons, natives of the Moon,
Whose lot it is to cross those beings' aims.
The human form as it before us stands,
The soul through which we live and feel and strive,
The spirit that illuminates our path :
All these, full many gods have worked to mould
Throughout the ages of eternity ;
And this their purpose was : to join in one,
Forces proceeding out of all the worlds
Which should, in combination, make mankind.

Capesius :
Thy words come near to causing me alarm,
For they regard mankind as nothing else
Than products of divine activities.

Felix :
And so a man who sets himself to learn
True spirit science must be meek indeed.

Whoso, in vanity, self knowledge seeks,
For him the gates of wisdom open not.

Capesius:
Once more, no doubt, will Dame Felicia
Come to mine aid, as she so oft hath done,
And make a picture for my seeking soul,
Which, being warmed thereat, may rightly grasp
The real true meaning in thy words contained.

Felicia:
Dear Felix oft hath told me in the past
The very words which now he spake to thee.
They freed a vision in mine heart, which I
Did promise, then and there, I must relate
Some day to thee.

Capesius:
Oh do so, dearest dame;
I sorely crave refreshment, such as thou,
Out of thy picture-storehouse canst provide.

Felicia:
So be it then. There once did live a boy,
The only child of needy forest-folk,
Who grew up in the woodland solitudes;
Few souls he knew beside his parents twain.
His build was slender, and his skin wellnigh
Transparent; marvels of the spirit hid
Deep in his eye; long could one gaze therein.
And though few human beings ever came
Into the circle of his daily life,

The lad was well befriended none the less.
When golden sunshine bathed the neighbouring hills,
With thoughtful eyes he drew the spirit-gold
Into his soul, until his heart became
Kin to the morning glory of the sun.
But when the morning sunshine could not break
Through dense dark banks of cloud, and heaviness
Lay on the hills around, his eye grew sad,
And sorrow took possession of his heart.
Thus his attention only centred on
The spirit-fabric of his narrow world,
A world that seemed as much a part of him
As did his limbs and body. Woodlands all
And trees and flowers he felt to be his friends ;
From crown and calyx and from tops of trees,
The spirit beings spake full oft to him,
And all their whisperings were lucid speech.
Marvels and wonders of the hidden worlds
Disclosed themselves unto the boy when he
Held converse in his soul with many things
By men deemed lifeless. Evening often fell,
And still the boy would be away from home,
And cause his loving parents much concern.
At such times he was at a place near by
In which a spring rose gushing from the rocks,
To fall in misty spray upon the stones.
When silver moonbeams would reflect themselves,
A miracle of colour and of light,
Full in the rush of hasting waterdrops,
The boy could spend beside the rock-born spring
Hour after hour, till spirit-shapes appeared
Before the vision of the youthful seer

Where moonbeams shivered on the falling drops.
They grew to be three forms in woman's shape,
Who spoke to him about those things in which
His yearning soul made known its interest.
And when upon a gentle summer night
The lad was once more sitting by the spring,
A myriad particles one woman took
From out the coloured web of waterdrops
And to the second woman handed them.
She fashioned from the watery particles
A gleaming chalice with a silver sheen
And handed it in turn unto the third.
She filled the vessel with the silver rays
Of moonlight and then gave it to the boy,
Who had beheld all this with inner sight.
During the night which followed this event
He dreamed a dream in which he saw himself
Robbed of this chalice by some dragon wild.
After this night had passed, the boy beheld
But three times more the marvel of the stream.
Then the three women stayed away from him
Although he sat and mused beside the spring
That gushed beneath the moonlight from the rock.
And when three times three hundred sixty weeks
Had passed, the boy had long become a man,
And left home, parents, and his woodland nook
To live in some strange city. There one eve
He sat and thought, tired with the day's hard toil,
Musing on what life held in store for him,
When suddenly he felt himself caught up
And set again beside that rock-bound spring ;
The women three, he there beheld once more,

And this time clearly he could hear them speak.
These were the words the first one spake to him :
' Think of me always whensoe'er thou art
O'ercome by loneliness, for I am she
Who lures the inner vision of mankind
To starry realms and heavenly distances.
And whosoever wills to feel my sway
To him I give a draught of life and hope
Out of the magic goblet which I hold.'
The second also spake these words to him :
' Forget me not at times when thou art nigh
To losing courage on life's battlefield.
I lead men's yearning hearts to depths of soul
And also up to lofty spirit-heights.
And whosoever seeks his powers from me,
For him I forge unwavering faith in life
Shaped by the magic hammer which I wield.'
The third one gave her message in these words :
' Lift up thy spirit's eye to gaze on me
When by life's riddles thou art overwhelmed.
'Tis I who spin the threads of thought that lead
Through labyrinths of life and depths of soul.
And whosoever puts his trust in me
For him I weave the rays of living love
Upon this magic loom at which I sit.'
Thus it befell the man, and in the night
That followed on his visions he did dream,
How that a dragon wild in circles crept
Round him, but was not able to draw near.
He was protected from that dragon's claws
By those same beings whom he saw of old
Seated beside the spring among the rocks,

Who had gone with him, when he left his home,
To guard him in his strange environment.

Capesius:
Accept my thanks, dear dame, before I go,
For this rich treasure thou hast given me.
(*Stands up to depart; Felix and Dame Felicia go into the house.*)
(*alone and at some distance*):
I feel the health that such a picture brings
Into my soul, and how to all my thoughts
It can restore the forces they had lost.
Simple the tale unfolded by the dame,
And yet it rouseth powers of thought in me
That carry me away to worlds unknown. . . .
Therefore will I in this fair solitude
Myself to dreams abandon, which so oft
Have sought to usher thoughts into my soul,
Thoughts which have proved themselves of higher worth
Than many a fruit of weeks of close research.
(*He disappears behind some thick bushes. Enter Johannes, sunk in deep thought.*)

Johannes to himself:
Was this some dream, or was it truth indeed?
I cannot bear the words my friend just spake
In calm serenity and yet so firm
About our separation which must come.
Would I might think it was but worldly sense,
That sets itself against the spirit's trend,
And, like a mirage, stands between us twain.—

I cannot, and I will not let the words
Of warning which Maria spake to me
Thus quench the sounding voice of mine own soul
Which says ' I love her,' says it night and day.
Out of the fountain of my love alone
Springs that activity for which I crave.
What value hath my impulse to create
Or yet my outlook on high spirit-aims
If they would rob me of that very light
Which can alone irradiate myself ?
In this illumination must I live,
And if it is to be withdrawn from me
Then shall my choice be death for evermore.
I feel my forces fail me at this hour
As soon as I would set myself to think
That I must wander o'er a path whereon
Her light doth shed no more its radiant beam.

A mist begins to form before mine eyes
Which shrouds the marvels o'er, which used to make
These woods, these cliffs a glory to mine eyes ;—
A fearful dream mounts from abysmal depths—
Which shakes me through and through with fear and dread—

O get thee gone from me ;—I yearn to be
Alone to dream my dreams ;
In them at least I still can fight and strive
To win back that which now seems lost to me.

He will not go ;—then will I fly from him.
(*He feels as if he were rooted to the ground.*)
What are the bonds that hold me prisoner

And chain me, as with fetters, to this place ?

(*The Double of Johannes Thomasius appears.*)

Ah !—whosoe'er thou art ; if human blood
Doth course within thy veins, or if thou art
Some spirit only—leave me and depart.
Who is it ?—Here some demon brings to me
My own self's likeness,—he will not depart ;—
It is the picture of my very self
And seems to be more powerful than that self.—

Double (*as if to Maria*) :

Maria, I do love thee ;—beating heart
And fevered blood are mine when at thy side.
And when thine eye meets mine, my pulse doth thrill
With passion's tremor : when thy dearest hand
Doth nestle in mine own, my body swoons
With rapture and delight.

Johannes :

Thou phantom ghost,
Of mist and fog compact, how dost thou dare
To utter blasphemy and so malign
The purest feelings of my heart. How great
A load of guilt must I have laid on me,
That I must be compelled to look upon
Such lust-befouled distortion of that love
That is to me so holy.

Double (*as if to Maria*) :

I have lent
Full oft unto thy words a listening ear.
I seemed to draw them up into my soul
As 'twere some message from the spirit-world.

But more than any scene thy words disclosed
I loved to have thy body close to mine.
And when thou spakst of soul-paths I was filled
With rapture that went leaping through my veins.
(*The voice of conscience speaks.*)

Conscience :
This is the unconfessed
But not yet dispossessed
Apparently repressed
Still by the blood possessed—
The secret fire
Of passionate desire.

Double (with a slightly different voice) :
I have no power to go away from thee ;
Oft wilt thou find me standing by thy side ;
I leave thee not till thou hast found the power
Which makes of me the very counterpart
Of that pure being which thou shalt become.
As yet thou hast not reached that high estate,
Which still deluded by thy personal self
Thou thinkest falsely that thou hast attained.
(*Enter Lucifer and Ahriman.*)

Lucifer :
O man, o'ercome thyself.
O man, deliver me.
Thou hast defeated me
In thy soul's highest realm ;
But I am bound to thee
In thine own being's depth.
Me shalt thou ever find

Across thy path in life
If thou wouldst strive to shield
All of thyself from me.
O man, o'ercome thyself,
O man, deliver me.

Ahriman:

O man, be bold and dare.
O man, experience me.
Thou hast availed to win
To spirit seership here,
But I must spoil for thee
The longing of thy heart.
Still must thou suffer oft
Deep agony of soul,
If thou wilt not remain
In all humility
Within my bounds.
O man be bold and dare.
O man, experience me.

(*Lucifer and Ahriman vanish; the Double also. Johannes walks, deep in thought, into the dark recesses of the forest. Capesius appears again. He has, from his post behind the bushes, watched the scene between Johannes and the Double as if it were a vision.*)

Capesius:

What have I seen and heard! It lay on me
Just like some nightmare. Came Thomasius
Walking like one who is absorbed in thought;
Then he stood still; it seemed as if he talked
With someone, and yet no one else was there.

I felt o'ercome as by some deadly fear ;
And saw no more of what went on around.
As if I were asleep, and unaware,
I must have sunk into yon picture-world
Which I can now so clearly call to mind.
It can indeed have been but little time
I sat and dreamed, unconscious of myself ;
And yet, how rich was yonder world of dreams,
What strange impressions doth it make on me.
Persons were there who lived in bygone days ;
I plainly saw them move and heard them speak.
I dreamed about a spirit-brotherhood
Which strove with steadfast purpose to attain
Unto the heights which crown humanity.
Among them I could clearly see myself ;
And all that happened was familiar too.
A dream.— . , yet most unnerving was that dream.
I know that in this life I certainly
Can ne'er have learned to know the like of it.
And each impression that it leaves behind
Reacts like very life upon my soul.
Those pictures draw me with resistless power.—
O if I could but dream that dream again.

Curtain, whilst Capesius remains standing

The following four scenes represent events taking place during the first third of the fourteenth century.

Their contents will show what Capesius, Thomasius, and Maria saw on looking back at their last incarnation.

Scene 6

A woodland meadow. In the background, high cliffs on which stands a castle. Summer evening. Countryfolk; Simon, the Jew; Thomas, the Master miner; the Monk. Countryfolk walking across the meadow, and stopping to talk.

First Countryman:
See yon vile Jew; he surely will not dare
To take the same road that we take ourselves;
For things might very well come to his ears
On hearing which they'd burn for many a day.

Second Countryman:
We must make clear to his effrontery,
Aye, very clear indeed, that we no more
Will tolerate his race in our good land
Across whose bounds he hath contrived to slink.

First Countrywoman:
He is protected by the noble knights
Who live in yonder castle; none of us

May enter ; but the Jew is welcome there.
For he doth do whate'er the knights desire.

Third Countryman :
'Tis very hard to know who serves the Lord
And who the devil. Thankful should we be
To our good lords who give us food and work.
What should we be if it were not for them ?

Second Countrywoman :
The Jew shall have my praise ; his remedies
Have cured the evil sickness that I had.—
Besides, he was so good and kind to me ;
And many more can tell the selfsame tale.

Third Countrywoman :
Yet did a monk let slip the truth to me,—
The Jew employs the devil's remedies ;
Beware his drugs ; transformed within the blood
They grant an entrance to all kinds of sin.

Fourth Countryman :
The men who wait upon the knights oppose
Our ancient customs, saying that the Jew
Hath stores of knowledge both to heal and bless
Which will in days to come be rightly prized.

Fifth Countryman :
New times and better are in store ; I see
Their coming in my spirit, when my soul
Pictures to me what eyes cannot behold.
The knights intend to bring all this about.

Fourth Countrywoman:
We owe the Church obedience, for she guards
Our souls from devil-visions, and from death,
And from hell-fire. The monks bid us beware
The knights, and their vile sorcerer, the Jew.

Fifth Countrywoman:
Only a short time longer need we bear
In patience the oppression of the knights.
Soon will their citadel in ruins lie.
Thus hath it been foretold me in a dream.

Sixth Countrywoman:
I fear such tales betoken mortal sin—
That noble knights do plot to bring us harm—
Nought do I see but good come from their hands;
I needs must count them Christians, as ourselves.

Sixth Countryman:
What men shall think of them in days to come
'Twere best to leave to be adjudged by those
Who shall live after us. Mere tools are we,
Used by the knights in their satanic arts
To war against true Christianity.
If they be driven out we shall be freed
From their pernicious sway, and live our lives
As we shall choose, in this our native land.
Now let us go to vespers, there to find
That which our souls require, and that which is
In harmony with our ancestral ways.
These novel teachings suit us not at all.

(*Exeunt the countryfolk.*)

(*Simon, the Jew, enters from the wood.*)

Simon:

Where'er I go, I find awaiting me
The ancient hatred and the bitter taunts.
And yet I suffer not a whit the less
Each time I find myself exposed to them.
There seems to be no reasonable cause
Why people should behave towards me thus.
And yet one thought pursues me evermore
Which makes the truth apparent to my soul,—
That nothing can befall us without cause.
So too a reason there must be for this,
That suffering is the lot of all my tribe.
So with the lords of yonder citadel,
I find their lot is near akin to mine.
They have but chosen of their own free will
That which by nature is imposed on me.
They set themselves apart from all mankind,
And strive in isolation to acquire
The powers through which they may attain their goal.
Thus can I feel the debt I owe to fate
And find her blessing in my loneliness.
Forced to rely on mine own soul alone
I took the realms of science for my field,
And recognized from what I learned therein
That ripe for new attainments was our time.
The laws of nature, hitherto unknown,
Must now reveal themselves unto mankind
And make him master of the world of sense
Whence he will be allowed to liberate
Powers he can put to use for his own ends.
So have I tried, as far as in me lay,
To make fresh progress in the healing art.

This toil endeared me to the brotherhood ;
Its members made me free of their estates
To seek to find the forces that reside
In plants and 'neath the surface of the ground,
That they may yield for us new benefits.
My actions therefore march with their designs,
And I confess that I have plucked with joy
Much goodly fruit whilst going on my way.

(*Exit into the wood.*)

(*Thomas, the Master miner, enters from the wood. Enter the Monk.*)

Thomas :

Here will I sit and rest a little while.
My soul hath need of rest to find itself
After the shocks which I have had to bear.

(*The Monk comes up to him.*)

Monk :

I greet thee heartily, most valiant son.
Thou hast come here in search of solitude.
Thy work well done, thou wouldst have peace and quiet
In which to turn thy thoughts to spirit-worlds.
To see my well-loved pupil thus employed
Rejoiceth me. But why so sad thine eyes ?
'Twould seem anxiety weighs down thy soul.

Thomas :

Pain oft is neighbour unto highest bliss ;
That this is so mine own life proves to-day.

Monk :

Hast thou then met with bliss and pain at once ?

Thomas :
I told thee, reverend father, that I loved
The overseer's daughter, and confessed
That she was also greatly drawn to me.
She is to marry me and share my life.

Monk :
She will be true to thee, come weal, come woe ;
She is a faithful daughter of the Church.

Thomas :
Such an one only would I take to wife ;
Since, honoured master, I have learned from thee
The meaning of obedience to God's will.

Monk :
And art thou also certain of thy soul,
That it will walk still further in the way
Of righteousness, which I have pointed out ?

Thomas :
So sure as in this body beats a heart
So sure will I, thy son, be true for aye
To those exalted teachings which of old
From thine own lips I was allowed to learn.

Monk :
And now that thou hast told me of thy bliss
Let me hear also from thee of thy woe.

Thomas :
Oft have I told thee what my life hath been.
Scarce had I left my childhood's days behind
Than I began to travel and to roam.

I never worked for long in any place.
Ever I cherished in my heart the wish
To meet my father, whom I loved, although
I had not heard a good report of him.
He left my dear good mother all alone
Because he wished to start his life anew
Unhampered by a wife and children twain.
The impulse for adventure dwelt in him.
I was a child still, when he went from us ;
My sister was a tiny new-born babe ;
My mother died of grief in no long time.
My sister was adopted by good folk
Who later moved away from my old home,
And of her fate I never more heard tell.
Some relatives assisted me to learn
A miner's work, in which I grew expert,
So that I found employment where I wished.
The hope that some day I should once more find
My father, never vanished from my heart.
And now at last my hope is realized
But also is for ever torn from me.
Matters of business led me yesterday
To seek for speech with my superior.
Thou knowest how lightly I esteem the knight
Who issueth directions for my work,
Since I have learned he is thine enemy.
From that time forward I made up my mind
Not to remain in service under him.
For reasons which remain unknown to me
The knight alluded in our interview
To matters which allowed him to declare
Himself to be—the father whom I sought.

What followed . . . I would gladly leave untold.
It would not have been hard to overlook
My mother's sufferings at his hands, and mine,
When he and I once more stood face to face,
And when he spoke, grief-burdened, of old days.
But in his form, stood facing me, thy foe.
And one thing then was manifest to me :—
How deep a gulf must ever separate
Myself from him, whom I so fain would love,
And whom I sought so long and ardently.
Now have I lost him for the second time,—
Such is the lot that hath befallen me.

Monk :
I would not e'er estrange thee from those ties
Imposed on thee by blood-relationship.
But what I can bestow upon thy soul
Shall ever be to thee a gift of love.

Curtain

Scene 7

A chamber in the castle whose exterior was shown in the preceding scene. Decorated throughout with symbols of a Mystic Brotherhood. (For costumes, see note on page 145.) Columns, arches, and vaulted roof with the mystic symbols shown in the Author's 'Occult Symbols.' First the Knights assemble; then the Monk and one of the Knights; later appears the spirit of Benedictus who has passed away about fifty years earlier. Then Lucifer and Ahriman. The Grand Master seated at a long table with four of the Brethren, indicated in the course of the scene.

Grand Master:

Ye who are joined with me in comradeship
To seek the goal appointed unto man,
And bring that knowledge from the spirit-realm
Into the scope of earth's activities,
As is appointed to our brotherhood,
Must also truly help me in this hour
When heavy trials impend. Then, know ye all
That since our venerated master fell,
A victim by the Powers of Darkness claimed,
Who draw their strength from Evil, helping on
The plan of Wisdom by their natural means,
That is by means of Opposition's strength,
Since Wisdom turneth Evil into Good:

Since that sad loss we strive on earth in vain,
For many a castle of our brotherhood
Hath by our enemies been overwhelmed,
And many Brethren dear to us have fallen
In fight, and followed our great Master home
Into the realm of everlasting light.
For us too doth the hour approach apace
When these stout walls that shelter us shall fall.
Our foes already spy the country round
To find a pretext under which they may
Rob us of our possessions, ne'er acquired
For our own use, but as a means to draw
Around us individuals, in whose souls
We could implant the germs of things to come.
These germs shall ripen when those men themselves
Find their way back from out the spirit-land
To live anew in future days on earth.

First Master of Ceremonies:
That this our brotherhood should be o'erthrown
By some obscure design of destiny,
Is something nowise inconceivable.
But that the fall of our community
Should doom so many brothers' single lives,
Would seem to contravene the cosmic law.
I do not wish my words to make complaint,
Since willingly our brothers suffer death.
But still my soul desires to comprehend
The sacrifice demanded from these men
Who have allied themselves unto a whole,
Because the powers of destiny decree
The overthrow and ruin of that whole.

Grand Master:
The separate life of individual men
Is linked most wisely to the world's design.
Amongst our brothers there will surely be
Some who have given proof of competence
To serve our brotherhood with their soul's power
And yet whose nature still shows many a stain.
The errors and misdeeds of such a heart
Must find their expiation in the pain
Suffered by it in service for the whole.
And he who, blameless both in act and deed,
Must none the less walk in the thorny way
Traced by the Karma of the brotherhood,
Will find his pain requited by the power
To mount aloft unto the higher life.

First Master of Ceremonies:
So then the brotherhood may tolerate
Within its ranks souls not yet purified
Who vow themselves to its exalted aims?

Grand Master:
He who to lofty works is dedicate
Doth mark alone the goodness in men's souls;
He lets the evil work its ransom out
As cosmic justice in its course decides.
My brothers, I have bid you meet me here
In order to remind you with grave words
That we have duties in our days of grief.
We must be ready to lay down our lives
For those high purposes to which we swore
Lifelong allegiance. Truly ye are

My brothers, if undauntedly your souls
Repeat the motto of our brotherhood :
' Separate existence must be sacrificed
By those who would set eyes on spirit goals,
Piercing the outer veil of world of sense,
And dare to let the spirit's will pour down
And flood their individual purposes.'

First Preceptor :
Exalted Master, shouldst thou design to test
The heart of each man in our brotherhood,
It would repeat that motto loud and clear !—
Yet do we beg thee to explain to us
Why, not content with robbing us of life
And our possessions, now our enemies
Would rob us also of those humble souls
Whom we have tended with unselfish love.
For every day affords new evidence
That not alone compulsion makes our folk
Submit themselves unto our conquerors ;
But that indeed they too have learned to hate
The spirit-path which we had shown to them.

Grand Master :
That which we have implanted in men's souls
May die indeed to-day ; but these same men,
Who once have breathed our spirit-radiance,
Will come again to earth, and then bestow
Upon the world the fruitage of our work.
Thus speaks unto my spirit oftentimes
Our mighty leader from the realm of death,
When in my quiet hours, I do sink down
Into my soul's deep places, and arouse

Strength to abide awhile in spirit-lands.
Then may I feel the master's presence near
And hear his words, as in the life of sense
I often heard them. Never doth he speak
About our work as drawing to a close;
But only of fulfilment of our aims
In later days that are to come on earth.

(*Exeunt the Grand Master and two of the Brotherhood.*)

First Preceptor:

He speaks of spirit-worlds in just such words
As men may speak of villages or towns. . . .
The way in which our loftiest brothers speak
Of other states of life oppresseth me.
And yet I am devoted fervently
Unto the progress of our earthly aims.

Second Master of Ceremonies:

I place reliance in our master's words.
The man who cannot hear with perfect faith
The tale of spirit and of spirit-worlds,
Is nowise lacking in capacity
To grasp a revelation of this kind.
The things he lacks are of a different mould.
Though he admit it not, he well may feel
That he is conscious of unworthiness
To be a member of the higher worlds.
A soul must be defiled by secret stains
And eager to deny that they are there,
That will not bow before the spirit-lore.

(*Exeunt.*)

(*Enter the Monk; the Second Preceptor enters and steps up to him.*)

Second Preceptor :
What errand bringeth thee to this our house
Which is for thee the home of enemies ?

Monk :
I must include amongst my friends all those
Who bear the form of men : this is our rule.
But hostile thou mayst well esteem the claim
Which I, by duty bound, must here present.
Those who are over me have sent me here,
And their desire is that the property
Belonging to the Church, as by old deeds
Is well attested, should be given back
To them without dispute. Yon tract of ground
Upon which ye have sunk your mine, belongs
In law and equity unto the Church.
The manner in which ye possessed yourselves
Of this estate confers no legal rights.

Second Preceptor :
Whether in law we have a right to call
It ours or no, would constitute a case
For legal disputation long drawn out.
But certain 'tis that it belongs to us
If we refer it to a higher law.
Yon tract of ground was lying lost and waste
When it was purchased by our brotherhood :
Not e'en an inkling had ye of the fact
That far below rich treasure lay concealed.
This have we won for human industry :
Its treasures travel far and wide to-day
To distant lands, to further human weal,

And many honest souls are now at work
In shaft and tunnel underneath the ground
Which in your hands lay waste and desolate.

Monk:
Then it doth not seem fair and right to thee
To urge upon thy brotherhood the need
Of peaceably accepting our demand
That so we may regain our property?

Second Preceptor:
Since we are not aware of any guilt,
But are convinced our cause is wholly just,
We can but wait in quiet confidence
To see if ye are really bent on strife,
When as before, yourselves are in the wrong.

Monk:
Then will ye have to thank your headstrong will
If we are driven to a sterner course.

Second Preceptor:
The honour of our brotherhood demands
That only when defeated, sword in hand,
Do we allow ourselves to be despoiled.

Monk:
So be it! Now my mission is fulfilled,
Between us there is no more need of words.
Will it be possible for me to have
An audience with thy lord, who here commands?

Second Preceptor:
The Master doubtless will concede thee this;
Yet wait, I pray thee, for a little while.
He cannot at this moment come to thee.
(*Exit.*)

Monk:
O, that mine office forceth me to tread
The halls of this detested brotherhood!
Turn where they may, my eyes must contemplate
Sinful devices and satanic spells.—
Almost a horror seizeth hold on me;—
A crackling and a rumbling fill the air;—
I feel the powers of ill are gathered round.
(*Noises heard.*)

But as my conscience is entirely clear
I will defy the enemy.
(*Noises heard.*)

Oh, this
Is terrible. . . .
(*The spirit of Benedictus appears.*)
Defend me, Saints of Heaven!

Benedictus:
Collect thyself, my son. I often came
To meet thee, when the fervour of thy prayers
Transported thee unto the spirit-world.
Take therefore courage in this present hour
And learn a truth which thou must realize
If spirit clearness is to hold its sway
And drive away the darkness from thy soul.

Monk:
When in my trials I prayed to Heaven for light,
And when my supplication winged its way
To realms celestial, and won repose,
Thou, venerated master, didst appear.
Thou, who wast aye our Order's ornament,
The while thou wert amongst us here on earth,
And out of higher realms didst speak to me,
Enlightening my mind and strengthening me.
My soul beheld thee with its inner eye,
My spirit ear was open to thy words.
In this hour also then, will I receive
The revelation with humility
Which thou shalt cause to flow into my soul.

Benedictus:
Thou art within that brotherhood's abode
Whom thou dost charge with wicked heresies.
They seem to hate what we are taught to love
And hold in honour what we count as sin.
Our brethren feel themselves in duty bound
To haste the spirit-brethren's overthrow,
And think their action sanctioned by the words
I spake myself whilst I was still on earth.
Yet do they not imagine that these words
Can only hold the living truth so long
As they are livingly evolved by those
Who have been my successors in my work.—
So let those thoughts which I once held on earth
Rise up afresh and live within thy soul
In harmony with needs of newer times;
And thus behold this Order, which doth seek

Its goal in mystic realms, as I should judge
And look on it, if it had been my lot
To dwell on earth and work with thee to-day.
This brotherhood is vowed to lofty aims ;
Those human beings who have joined its ranks
Have premonitions of the days to come ;
Their leaders see with a prophetic eye
The fruits that shall grow ripe in future times.
Science and daily life shall undergo
A change of form and seek ideals new ;
And what this brotherhood doth now achieve,
Whom thou hast lent a hand to persecute,
Are deeds which serve to bring this change about.
Alone by peaceful union of the aims
Sought by our brethren and these heretics
Can good be made to blossom on this earth.

Monk :
This warning, of which I am worthy found,
How can I act upon it ? It departs
Amazingly from all that I have held,
Up to this moment, to be right and good.
(*Ahriman and Lucifer appear.*)
But other beings now are drawing nigh !
Why do they come and stand beside thee now ?

Ahriman :
This further message comes from other realms.
It cannot seem an easy thing for thee
Thy predecessor's bidding to obey,
Reflect—he dwells in everlasting bliss.
And actions by decree and duty there
Desirable, may well upon the earth

Lead to confusion at the present time.
Lift up thine eyes to where he dwells on high
If thou wouldst seek for comfort from the bliss
Which, when the latter days of earth draw near,
By cosmic spirits is to be bestowed.
But if at present thou wouldst act aright,
Be guided only, in the choice of paths,
By that which reason and the senses teach.
Thou hast been able clearly to discern
The sinful ways of yonder brotherhood
Which they would fain keep secret from the world ;
Thus hast thou learned that laws for future life
Can well be framed by souls now steeped in sin !
How canst thou wish, now that thou knowest these things,
To live in friendship with the brotherhood ?
For error is a poor and sterile soil
Where good fruit cannot come to ripening.

Lucifer :
Thy pious mind hath shown the road to thee.
It is most true that times and objects change ;
But none the less 'tis not for heretics
To trace the paths on which mankind must tread.
The error of this spirit-brotherhood
Is dangerous, because it speaks the truth,
And yet expresses it in such a way
As makes the truth more deadly than a lie.
A man who openly avowed he lied
Would have to be bereft of common sense
'Ere he could bring himself to such belief
That men would gladly follow where he led.

The spirit-knights indeed are shrewd of mind ;
They do not fail to speak about the Christ
Because this name can open every door
That gives admission to the souls of men.
But ever can men easiest be led
Into the service of the Antichrist
When in the name of Christ he is proclaimed.

Monk :
Conflicting voices from the world of souls
Assail mine ears, as often heretofore,
And always with an aim to counteract
The pious promptings of a mind devout.
How shall I find the paths that lead to good
If by the Powers of Evil they be praised ?
Almost it seems to me as if indeed—
But no, such words shall not be thought by me—,
The wisdom of my master shall reveal
The meaning of his words, so dark to me.

Benedictus :
I can direct thee to the proper path,
If thou wilt let the words which once I spake
On earth possess thee in thine inmost soul.
And if thou art resolved to find the life
That lives within those words upon those planes
On which thou now canst see me face to face,
The proper path shall be made plain to thee.

Curtain, while the Mónk, the Spirit of Benedictus, Lucifer, and Ahriman are still on the stage

Scene 8

The same. The First Preceptor; Joseph Keane; then the Grand Master with Simon; later the First and the Second Master of Ceremonies. Joseph Keane is there first; the Preceptor approaches him.

First Preceptor:

Thou didst send word thou wouldst have speech with me.
What is the news that thou art come to bring?

Keane:

Most weighty matters both to thee and me.
Thou knowest the master miner Thomas here,
Who renders service to thee?

First Preceptor:

Well I know
The worthy man; we prize him for his skill,
And his subordinates hold him in love.

Keane:

And dost thou know my child, Cecilia, too?

First Preceptor (moved):

It hath so chanced that I have seen the maid
When I have met thee with thy family.

Keane:
It happened that soon after Thomas came
He paid us frequent visits in our home.
They grew more frequent; it was evident
That to Cecilia his whole heart went out.
We did not marvel that this should be so.
But, knowing the girl's nature, it was long
Ere we could think that she returned his love.
Her life was well nigh one continuous prayer,
And almost all society she shunned.
Yet ever doth it now appear more clear
That to this stranger she hath giv'n her heart.
And as things are, we feel ourselves compelled
Not to oppose the wishes of our child;
Thomas she loves, and she would marry him.

First Preceptor (with faltering movements):
Why runs this marriage counter to thy will?

Keane:
My lord, there is no need for me to tell
Of my devotion to the brotherhood.
My heart would have to bear a heavy load
If my child's love, in its entirety,
Were cast upon the side of those who say
That you and I alike are heretics.
The monk who now o'er yonder abbey rules
Close by our home, and who doth ever seek
To thwart the mission of the brotherhood,
Hath won dominion o'er our daughter's soul.
As long as she is still beneath my roof
So long shall I too not abandon hope

That she may yet again retrace the path
Which leads from spirit-darkness unto light.
But I shall have to give her up for lost
When she shall have become the wife of one
Who, like herself, looks for salvation's light
According to the precepts of that monk.
His Reverence hath had complete success
In foisting such opinions as he holds
On Thomas, who receives them in full faith.
A thrill of terror would run over me
To hear the curses pour from Thomas' lips
Whene'er our speech should touch the brotherhood.

First Preceptor :
Our enemies are many ; if one more
Is added it cannot affect us much.
Thy words have not yet made it clear to me
What my concern is with this tale of love.

Keane :
My lord, thou seest this packet in mine hand.
Its contents warrant me to come to thee.
My wife and I alone have read the lines ;
None else in these parts knows a word of them.
Now must they be made known to thee as well—
The maid who passeth for our flesh and blood
Is not the offspring of my wife and me.
We undertook the training of the child
When her own mother died. What I have still
To say will make it seem unnecessary,
To tell at length how all this came to pass.
For long we knew not who her father was ;

The girl to-day knows not her parentage ;
Father and mother she beholds in us.
And such a state of things might have gone on
Since we do love her as our very own.
But some years later than her mother's death
The papers that I hold were brought to us ;
They make it plain who our child's father is—
I cannot tell if he is known to thee.
(*The Preceptor loses control over himself.*)
But now I know—am sure . . .
. . . that thou art he.
There is no need for me to tell thee more.
But since it is thy child who is concerned
I beg thee to extend to me thine aid.
United our endeavours may succeed
To save her from the darkness that impends.

First Preceptor :
Dear Keane. Thou hast been ever true to me,
And I would fain still further count on thee.
Neither within nor yet without these walls
Must any in this country ever know
The truth of my relation to this girl.

Keane :
My word thereon. I mean no harm to thee ;
I only beg that thou wilt lent thine aid.

First Preceptor :
Thou dost perceive that at the present time
I cannot talk with thee at greater length—
I pray thee come to-morrow.

Keane:

I will come.
(*Exit.*)

First Preceptor:
How cruelly my fate fulfils itself.
I left my wife and child in misery,
Since they seemed hindrances upon the path
Along which vanity did beckon me.
It led me on to join this brotherhood.
In words of solemn import I then vowed
My service to the cause of human love
Albeit I was laden with the guilt
Arising from the opposite of love.
The brotherhood's clear vision, as applied
To acts of men, is manifest in me.
It welcomed me a brother in its ranks
And forthwith laid on me its rules severe.
To self-examination was I led
And knowledge of myself, which otherwise
In other walks of life I had not found.
And then when, under Fate's decree, my son
Came and dwelt near me, I was fain to think
That mighty Powers were merciful to me
In showing how to expiate my sin.
I knew long since that this Keane's foster-child
Was none else than the daughter whom I left.

The brotherhood is near its overthrow,
Each brother resolute to meet his death,
Convinced that those high purposes will live
For which he makes his life the sacrifice.

But I, alas, have felt for many days
I was not worthy of this glorious end.
My purpose ever ripened to make known
My case unto the master, and to crave
Permission to forsake the brotherhood.
I had in mind thenceforward to devote
My days unto my children, and so far
As in this earth-life yet is possible,
To offer penance. But I clearly see,
That 'twas not filial longing brought my son
To this same spot to seek his father out,
Although his good heart made him thus believe.
But he was led by forces in the blood
Which drew him to his sister. Other ties,
Blood-born, were loosened by a father's guilt,
Or else yon monk had never had the power
To rob me so entirely of my son.
Indeed the robbery is so complete,
That with the brother will the sister too
From my paternal longings be estranged.
And so nought else remains for me but this,
To take immediate measures to ensure
That they shall know the truth about themselves,
And then with resignation to await
The penance laid upon me by those powers
Who keep the reckoning of our misdeeds.

(*Exit.*)

(*After an interval the Grand Master and Simon enter.*)

Grand Master:
Henceforward, Simon, in the castle walls

Thou must abide, for since that lying tale
Was published that thou art a sorcerer,
Peril awaits thine every step outside.

Simon :
My heart is sore indeed to find that men
Assail in ignorance a proffered aid
Whose only object is to do them good.

Grand Master :
Those who, by grace of lofty spirit-powers,
Can turn their gaze upon the souls of men,
Will see the enemies therein arrayed
Which fight against the nature of the soul.
The battle which our mortal foes prepare
Is but the emblem of that greater strife
Waged in the heart incessantly by powers
Which are at enmity amongst themselves.

Simon :
My lord, in very truth these words of thine
Arouse an echo in my deepest soul.
Indeed my nature is not prone to dreams ;
Yet when I walk alone through wood and field
A picture often riseth in my soul
Which with my will I can no more control
Than any object which mine eye beholds.
A human form appears in front of me
Which fain would grasp my hand in fellowship.
Such suffering on his features is expressed
As never yet I saw in any face.
The greatness and the beauty of this man

Seize firmly hold of all my powers of soul ;
I fain would sink to earth and humbly bow
Before this messenger from other worlds.
Next moment like a raging flame, there comes
The wildest anger searing through my heart ;
Nor can I gain the mastery o'er the power
That fans the opposition of my soul,
And I am forced to thrust aside the hand
Which is so lovingly held out to me.
So soon as to my senses I return
The radiant form hath vanished from my sight.
And thereupon, when I recall in thought
That which my spirit hath so often seen,
Before my soul this thought presents itself
Which moves me to the bottom of my heart.
I feel myself attracted by thy lore,
In which a Spirit-being is revealed
Descending from the Kingdom of the Sun,
To take a human form upon Himself,
In order to disclose Himself to men.
I cannot keep the glowing beauty out
That pours upon me from thy noble lore,
And yet my soul will not assent thereto.
The primal form of our humanity
In thy great Spirit-being I admit ;
But still my individual self rebels
When I would turn to him in faith and love.
So must I ever wage an inward war
The archetype of every outer strife.
In sore distress, I seek in vain a clue
To solve the riddle of my life and fate :
How comes it that I understand so well

And yet that I in no wise can believe
The things thy noble teachings do reveal ?
I follow thine example faithfully,
Yet find myself opposed at every point
To this example's goal and origin.
And when I must thus recognize myself,
A flood of doubt o'erwhelms my falt'ring faith
That in this life I may yet find myself.
Nay, worse than this, the dread doth haunt me oft
That this bewilderment of doubt may run
Through all the lives that I shall live on earth.

Grand Master :
The picture, which thou sawest, my good friend,
Before my spirit stood out strong and clear
Whilst thou didst paint it in those vivid words ;
And as thou didst speak further, then it grew
In breadth before mine eyes until I saw
How cosmic aims are linked to human fate.

(*Exeunt.*)

(*After an interval, the two Masters of Ceremonies enter.*)

First Master of Ceremonies :
Dear brother, I must openly confess
That our Grand Master's clemency exceeds
My comprehension, when I needs must see
What bitter wrong our foes inflict on us.
Although they will not study what we teach
They scruple not to paint us in men's eyes
As heretics and messengers from hell.

Second Master of Ceremonies:
His clemency from our own teaching flows.
Can we proclaim life's highest aim to be
To understand the soul of every man,
And then misunderstand our foes ourselves?
There are amongst them many men indeed
Who follow in the footsteps of the Christ.
Yet even from the souls of such as these
The essence of our teachings must be veiled,
Though they should hear them with the outer ear.
Remember, brother, how reluctantly,
And with what inner conflict, thou wast led
To grant admission to the spirit-voice.
We know, from what the master hath revealed,
That future men will see in Spirit-light
The lofty Being of the Sun, who trod
This Earth once only in a human frame.
This revelation we with joy believe
And gladly follow where our leaders tread.
Yet but a short time since these weighty words
Were said by him whom we acclaim as Head:
'Your souls must ripen slowly, if indeed
With eyes prophetic ye would see to-day
That which the men of later days shall see;
And ye must not imagine,' said our chief,
'That after passing one initial test
Ye can have sight of things that are to be.
When ye shall have attained to certainty
That all mankind must needs be born again,
Ye then will have to meet the second test
Which sets your personal illusions free

To dim the radiance of the Spirit-light.'
This solemn warning, too, the master gave :
' Ofttimes reflect, in meditation's hour,
How psychic monsters, of illusion born,
Beset the path of those who seek the light.
Who falls their victim may see even there
Human existence where the Spirit seeks
To be revealed to Spirit-light alone.
If ye would worthily prepare yourselves
To recognize, by help of inner sight,
The Light of Wisdom streaming from the Christ,
Over yourselves ye must keep watch and ward
Lest personal illusion blind you then
When your souls think that it is furthest off.'
With this injunction clearly held in view
We soon shall rid us of the vain belief
That in these times we can transmit these truths,
Whose beauty we confess within our souls,
In easy manner to posterity.
Rather must we take comfort from the fact,
That we to-day can meet so many souls
In whom the seed, although they know it not,
Already hath been sown for future lives.
This seed can only manifest itself
In man, by opposition to those Powers
With which it later will ally itself.
In all this hatred which pursues us now
I do but see the seed of future love.

First Master of Ceremonies :
Certain it is that highest truth's intent
Can only in such manner be disclosed ;

Yet hard it seems in this our present age
To shape our lives to follow out its aim.

Second Master of Ceremonies:
Here too I follow out our master's words:
'It is not granted unto all mankind
To live Earth's future stages in advance.
But individuals there must ever be
Who can foresee what later days will bring,
And who devote their feeling to those Powers
Which loose all being from its present ties
To guard it safe for all Eternity.'

The curtain falls, while the two Masters of Ceremonies are still in the hall

Scene 9

The woodland meadow, as in Scene 6. Joseph Keane, Dame Keane, their daughter Bertha; afterwards, Countryfolk, later the Monk; finally Keane's foster-daughter Cecilia and Thomas.

Bertha:
Dear mother, I so long to hear the tale
Cecilia often spake of years ago.
Thou dost know all those fairy-tales to tell
Which father brings back with him from the knights
When he comes home, and which with greatest joy
So many friends are always glad to hear.

Keane:
The soul can find real treasure in those tales.
The gifts which on the spirit they confer
Decay not with the body in the grave,
But bear their fruits in later lives on earth.
Darkly, as through a glass, we glimpse their truth;
And from such darkened sight, our souls can win
Knowledge to serve our needs in daily life.
If only folk could realize the store
Of precious gifts our knights have to bestow!
Cecilia and Thomas have, alas,

Deaf ears at present for such things as these ;
Since they draw wisdom from another source.

Bertha :
To-day I fain would listen to that tale
Which tells about the Evil and the Good.

Dame Keane :
Right gladly will I tell it thee ; attend.
Once on a time there lived a man who spent
Much time in puzzling over cosmic truths.
That which tormented his poor brain the most
Was, how to learn of Evil's origin ;
And to that question he could not reply.
The world was made by God, so he would say,
And God can only have in him the Good.
How then doth Evil spring from out the Good ?
Time and again he puzzled over this,
But could not find the answer that he sought.
Now it befell that on a certain day
This seeker on his travels passed a tree
That was engaged in converse with an axe.
Unto the tree the axe did speak these words :
' That which thou canst not do I can achieve,
I can fell thee ; but thou canst not fell me.'
Unto the vain axe thus the tree replied :
' 'Twas but a year ago a man did cleave
The very wood of which thine haft is made
Out of my body with another axe.'
And when the man had listened to these words
A thought was straightway born within his soul
Which he could not set clearly down in words,

But which completely answered his demand :
How Evil could originate from Good.

Keane :
Think on this story, daughter, and thou'lt see,
How contemplating nature's mysteries
May form fresh knowledge in a human head.
I know how many things I can make clear
Unto myself by spinning out in thought
The tales by which the knights enlighten us.

Bertha :
I know I am a simple little thing,
Without ability to understand
The learned words which clever people use
In setting forth the science they profess.
I have no taste for matters of that kind.
Whenever Thomas tells us of his work
I nearly fall asleep. But I could spend
Unnumbered hours in listening to the tales
Which father brings back home on his return
From visiting the castle, and wherewith
He often weaves a story of his own
As he recounts them to us hour on hour.

(*Exeunt.*)

(*After an interval, the Countryfolk come across the meadow.*)

First Countryman :
My uncle yesterday came home again.
He dwelt a long time in Bohemia,
And earned an honest living in the mines.

Full many a bit of news he hath to tell
Picked up by him upon his journeyings ;
Excitement and unrest are everywhere ;
Attacks are made upon the Spirit-Knights.
Our local brotherhood cannot escape ;
Already preparations have been made
And ere long will this castle be besieged.

Second Countryman :
I hope 'twill not be long 'ere they attack.
Many amongst us will most certainly
Gladly enlist among the fighting-men ;
I mean to be among the first myself.

First Countrywoman :
Thou wilt but hurry headlong to thy doom !
How can a man be such a witless fool !
Hast thou forgot how strongly fortified
The castle is ? The battle will be grim.

Second Countrywoman :
It is no business of the countryfolk
To mix with things they do not understand.
Yet there are many hereabouts to-day
Who do naught else but go from place to place
And fan the embers of revolt and strife.
Things have already come to such a pass
That sick folk have to cry in vain for aid.
The good man who in former days was wont
To help so many in sore need, can now
No more pass out beyond the castle gates,
So cruelly have folk belaboured him.

Third Countrywoman :
Of course ! for many people were enraged
On hearing from what source the sickness came
That broke out, all at once, among our cows.
The Jew brought this upon them by his spells.
He only seems to make sick people well
In order, by the use of hellish arts,
Better to serve the ends of evil powers.

Third Countryman :
This empty prattle about heresy
Little availed. Truth is, our countryfolk
Had what they needed. Nought else came of it
Save that with dark mysterious sayings they beguiled
The idle hour ; till, with cunning skill
A clever judge of human frailty
Devised this silly tale about the Jew,
How he had laid a spell upon our stock—
And then indeed the storm began to rise.

Fourth Countryman :
I think that every one of you might know
What wars do mean, with all their misery.
Have not our fathers told us all that they
Must needs endure, when all the countryside
Was overrun by bands of soldiery ?

Fourth Countrywoman :
I always said that it would come to pass :
Their lordships' rule must shortly fade away.
Already hath a dream revealed to me
How we can be of service to the troops
When they arrive to carry out the siege,
And take good care of all their creature needs.

Fifth Countryman :
If dreams to-day are still to be believed,
That is a matter we need not discuss.
The knights have tried to make us cleverer
Than were our fathers. Now they have to learn
How much our cleverness hath been increased.
Our fathers let them in ; in our turn we
Shall drive them out. I know the secret tracks
That yield an entrance to the fortalice.
I used to work within it until rage
Drove me away ; now will I show the knights
How we can make their science serve our ends.

Fifth Countrywoman :
He surely hath no good thought in his heart ;
I trembled as I listened to his words.

Sixth Countryman :
In spirit-vision I have lately seen
A traitor leading hostile soldiery
By secret ways into the castle's keep.

Sixth Countrywoman :
Such visions are destructive, I should say.
No one who thinks as Christians ought to think
But is aware that honesty alone,
Not treason, can from evil set us free.

Sixth Countryman :
I let folk talk, and help as best I can.
How often do we hear a thing called wrong
By those who lack the courage in themselves

To do that very thing. Let's go our ways ;
I see the father coming down the road ;
We will not interrupt his train of thought.
I found no difficulty up till now
In understanding everything he taught ;
But in the sermon which he preached to-day
He said much that one could not understand.

(*The Countryfolk go away towards the forest.*)

(*After an interval the Monk comes along the meadow path.*)

Monk :

It must be that a soul is led astray
In striving to pursue her natural course.
The weakness of my heart alone allowed
Such visions to appear before mine eyes
As those which I beheld within those walls.
That they must show themselves to me in strife
Is proof enough how little yet in me
The psychic forces work in harmony.
Therefore will I address myself anew
To kindle in myself those potent words
Which bring me light from out the Spirit-heights.
That man alone prefers another road,
Whom personal illusions have made blind.
The soul can only triumph over lies
By proving herself worthy of the grace
Which Spirit-light, outpoured from founts of love,
In words of wisdom doth reveal to her.
I know that I shall find the greatest strength
Which can throw light on what the Fathers taught,

When from the gloom of self's imaginings
With lowly heart submissive I can flee.

(*Exit.*)

(*After an interval there appear on the meadow Cecilia and Thomas.*)

Cecilia :

Dear brother, when in fervent ecstasy
Of silent prayer my soul did bow herself
Unto the Fountain of the World, and yearn
Whole-heartedly to be made one therewith,
A light before my spirit would appear—
With gentle warmth and radiancy aglow ;
This then transformed itself into a man
Who looked into my face with tender eyes,
And spoke to me. These were the vision's words :
' Human delusion left thee once forlorn,
And now thou art upborne by human love ;
Wait therefore until longing finds a way
To bring the seeker safely to thy side.'
Thus spake this human figure oft to me ;
Nor could I fathom what the words might mean ;
And yet a dim foreboding made me glad,
That some time they should be fulfilled for me.
And then, beloved brother, thou didst come,
And when I first set eyes upon thy face,
I felt my senses leave me ; for thou wast
That human figure's very counterpart.

Thomas :

Dream and foreboding told thee but the truth,
Indeed 'twas longing guided me to thee.

Cecilia :
And when thou didst request me as thy wife
I thought the Spirit had ordained it so.

Thomas :
That in good truth the Spirit's purpose was
To re-unite us, clearly may be seen,
Although we read it not aright at first.
As wife and helpmeet, sent me from above,
So didst thou seem to me, when first we met.
And then my long-lost sister did I find.

Cecilia :
And henceforth nothing shall divide us twain.

Thomas :
Yet many obstacles between us rise.
Thy foster-parents by close ties are bound
Unto the brotherhood which I must spurn.

Cecilia :
They are incarnate love and kindness both ;
And loyal friendship will they give to thee.

Thomas :
My creed will separate me from their love.

Cecilia :
Through me you will find out the way to them.

Thomas :
Keane is a kindly man, but he is stubborn ;

He never will see aught but darkness there
Where I perceive the very fount of light.
In riper years it was first granted me
To turn my steps toward this light of truth,
Since all I learned of it in childhood's days
Upon my spirit made but little mark ;
Whilst later on, my every thought was bent
On scientific knowledge as a means
To gain a livelihood. When I came here
At last I found the teacher and the guide
Who had the power to liberate my soul.
The teaching he hath let me listen to
Doth bear the very stamp of truth itself.
Such is his speech that heart and head alike
Must yield themselves as captives to his words,
So full at once of gentleness and good.
I took the greatest trouble heretofore
To understand the other spirit type ;
And found it could but unto error lead.
Since it clings only to those spirit-powers
Which may be faithful guides in earthly ways
But cannot lift one up to higher worlds.
How shall I therefore ever find the way
Into the hearts of people who believe
That from this error all salvation springs ?

Cecilia :
I hear thy words, dear brother, and they seem
The product of no peaceful frame of mind.
Yet 'tis a peaceful scene of former days
Which they have reawakened in my soul.
'Twas one Good Friday, many years ago,

I saw the scene of which I speak to thee.
It happened that upon that day the man
Who wore my brother's features, said to me :
' From source divine hath sprung the human soul ;
It can in death dive down to nature's depths ;
In time it will set spirit free from death.'
Not until afterwards was I aware
That these words are the motto of our knights.

Thomas :
Alas ! my sister, that thy lips should speak
Those evil words, which our opponents take
As revelation of the highest truth.

Cecilia :
I have at heart no sympathy at all
With outward acts committed by the knights ;
I truly serve the creed that nourished thee.
But never could I make myself believe
That men who guide the footsteps of the soul
By such instruction toward so high a goal
Walk not themselves the path that Christ hath trod.
The Spirit's pupil am I, staunch and true,
And I confess that it is my belief
That on that day, my brother's spirit strove
To speak of aims that lead the soul to peace.

Thomas :
The powers of destiny have not ordained
Peace for the soul, it seems, for thee and me ;
They take our father from us that same hour
That sees him once again restored to us.

Cecilia :

My faculties are clouded o'er with pain
When of our father thus I hear thee speak.
Thy heart would draw thee to his side in love,
And yet thou tremblest at the very thought
Of union with him whilst he is alive.
Thou followest our leader in good faith,
Yet canst not hear the messages of love
Which his commands so tenderly convey.
A dark enigma faceth me ; I see
The goodness of thy heart, and thy strong faith,
And yet must shudder at the deep abyss
That yawns so terribly between them.
And did not hope live on to comfort me,
And tell me love is never overcome,
I should lack courage to endure this pain.

Thomas :

Dear sister, thou hast yet to learn the power
Of thought, once it hath gripped a human soul.
This is no case of son opposing sire ;
But one thought from another turns away.
Thought is the sovereign whom my soul obeys ;
Did I refuse her homage I should be
In very truth my spirit's murderer.

Curtain ; Thomas and Cecilia still standing in the meadow

(*This closes the vision into the fourteenth century. The following is the sequel of the events described in the first five scenes.*)

Scene 10

The same landscape as in Scene 5.

Capesius (waking from the vision which had brought his previous incarnation before his soul):

This unfamiliar landscape, and this seat,
A cottage and a wood in front of me!
Are they familiar? Urgently they claim
Familiarity; yet they do lie
Upon my nature, like some heavy weight.
They seem like real things. But no; all this
Is but a picture of soul substance spun.
I know how pictures such as these are made
Out of the thirst and longing of the soul.
As if awaking from my craving's dream
From out the spirit-ocean I have come—
And memory, dread and shuddering shape, appears
To bring to mind these longings of my soul.
How burnt my thirst to know the world's design!
This longing vain, of self-denial born,
Consumed my nature to its very roots.
Sought I existence with impetuous will,
Then all the world's design did flee from me.
A moment, of eternity methinks,
Poured out such storms of suffering on my soul
As only can be felt in life's full course.

Between me and this craving fear there stood
That which had brought this fear to life in me.
I felt myself embrace the universe,
And all my personality was lost—
But no, it was not I who felt like this,
It was another being sprung from me.
I saw mankind and all its works evolve
From cosmic thoughts which rushing fast through Space,
Pressed on in eagerness to be revealed.
They drew the picture of a living world
In all its detail spread before my gaze.
From my soul-substance did they draw the power
With which to fashion Being out of Thought.
And as this world condensed before mine eyes,
My personal sense of feeling passed from me,
And words resounded from this picture-world,
Thinking themselves; and thrust themselves on me.
From out life's needs they brought to being things,
And gifted them with power from deeds of good.
Thus they resounded through the breadth of Space:
'O man know thou thyself within thy world.'
Then saw I one who stood in front of me
And, showing me his soul, displayed mine own.
And then the cosmic words went on to say:
'So long as in the circle of thy life
Thou canst not feel this being close entwined,
Thou art a dream, and dost but dream thy life.'
I could not think in figures clear and plain;
I did but see bewildering forces press
From nothingness to life, and back to nothingness—

But if my spirit seeks yet further back
And recollects what I beheld before,
A living picture stands before my soul,
Which is not blurred, as was all else that I
In later moments could experience,
But which more plainly sets before my soul
Men's lives and actions with each detail clear.
I gaze upon this picture, and can tell
What men these are, and what it is they do ;
I recognize each soul I look upon,
Although their bodies' shapes are not the same.
I look upon all this as though myself
Were then a person living in this world ;
But none the less with cold unfeeling eye
I scan a picture that seems life itself.
It seems as if its working on my soul
Withheld itself until that later time
Which to my spirit earlier was displayed.
Within a spirit-brotherhood I could
Myself and others clearly recognize ;
And just as man doth often feel a scene
Of bygone days arise from memory's fount,
Thomas I see, a miner and my son,
And forthwith I must call to mind that soul,
Who, as Thomasius, is known to me.
The lady whom I know as seeress now
Stands there before mine eyes as mine own child.
Maria, who befriends Thomasius,
Reveals herself to me in monkish garb,
And doth condemn the spirit-brotherhood.
And Strader wears the visage of the Jew.
In Joseph Keane and in his wife I see

The souls of Felix and Felicia.
The others' lives lie open to my view
Without concealment ; so too, doth mine own.
But while I am engrossed in reading it,
The picture fades and disappears from view.
And I can feel that those soul-elements
Of which that living picture was composed
Themselves are pouring into mine own soul.
I feel myself endowed with strength of soul
In my whole being, and I seem set free
From all the fetters of the world of sense :
My being doth embrace the universe.
Thus do I feel that instant so prolonged
Which I was able to live through, before
That living picture rose before mine eyes.
And now still further backward can I look.
Itself condensing out of cosmic thought
This forest doth appear before my gaze,
This house where Felix and Felicia
So often brought me comfort in distress.
Now—in the world I find myself once more
From which a moment since I felt myself
Removed by vast expanse of time and space.
And that which latterly I still could see :
The picture which disclosed to me myself
Is wafted like some misty fantasy
O'er all that now I feel by means of sense.
It is a nightmare, that oppresseth me ;
It gropes in deep recesses of my soul ;
It opens cosmic doors to breadths of Space.—
What storm is this that shakes my being's depths ?
What enters forcibly from cosmic space ?

A Voice (representing spirit-conscience):
Feel now what thou hast seen,
Live o'er what thou hast done
Refreshed from Being's source;
Thine own life hast thou dreamed.
Work out this deed in thee
With noble spirit-light:
Regard thy daily task
With force of spirit-sight.
If this thou canst not do,
To empty Nothingness
Thou art for ever doomed.

Curtain, before Capesius has left the stage

Scene II

The same meditation-chamber as in Scene 2.
Maria, Ahriman.

Ahriman:
So Benedictus spun a cunning web
Of thought, whose pattern thou hast followed out,
And now thou art fast bound in error's toils.
Thomasius too and e'en Capesius
Are victims of this same illusion's spell.
For at the same time as thine eyes beheld
This long-past earthly life—so too did theirs.
Henceforward 'tis in that time thou dost seek
To find the causes of thy present life;
But only error can be error's fruit
If thou art ready to allow thyself
To make the path of duty here and now
Depend upon such vain imaginings.
That Benedictus took from thine own brain,
And placed these visions in an earlier age,
Thine own self's knowledge can quite clearly prove.
Thou sawst people of this present time
But little changed from those of former days.
Woman thou sawst as woman, man as man,

And all their attributes were similar ;
Thou canst not therefore any longer doubt
That what thou didst transfer to time's dim past
By spirit-vision, far from being truth
Was but the vain delusion of thy soul.

Maria :
In thee I see the sire of all deceit ;
Yet know I too thou oft dost speak the truth.
And any one who chose to set aside
All counsel that might reach him through thy words
To utmost error soon would fall a prey.
And as illusion wears the mask of truth
The better to ensnare the souls of men,
So 'tis but easy for a man to yield
Thereto, by trying like a coward to slink
Past every place where error might be hid.
More than illusion finds the soul in thee ;
For in the Spirit of Deceit doth live
The force that gives mankind discernment true.
I therefore shall oppose thee without fear.
Thou hast attacked that portion of my soul
Which must at all times keep the most alert.
If I weigh all the evidence which thou
In clever calculation hast advanced,
'Twould seem that only pictures from my brain
Have been transferred into an earthly past.
Yet would I ask thee if thy wisdom can
Unlock the door of every earthly age ?

Ahriman :
No beings live in any spirit-realm

Which set themselves to thwart me when I seek
Admission into any earthly age.

Maria :
The lofty Powers of Fate have chosen well
In setting thee to be their enemy.
Thou dost encourage all thou wouldst restrain.
Thou bringest freedom to the souls of men
When thou dost penetrate to their soul-depths.
From thee originate the powers of thought
Whence knowledge springs with all its vain deceits
But which can also guide man to the truth.
In Spirit-land there is but one domain
Where may be forged the sword that bids thee flee
As soon as thou dost set thine eyes thereon.
It is a realm in which the souls of men
Do gather knowledge through their reason's powers,
Which knowledge they will afterwards transmute
To Spirit-wisdom. If I have the strength
To forge the word of truth into that sword,
That very moment thou must flee from hence.
So hearken well, thou sire of all deceit ;
If truth triumphant I proclaim to thee :—
In earthly evolution there are times
In which the ancient forces slowly die,
And dying, see the growth of newer ones.
At such a cyclic point my friends and I
Did find ourselves drawn close by spirit-bonds
Whilst seeking out our former lives on earth.
True Spirit-men were working at that time,
United in a brotherhood of souls
Whose aims were sought in mysticism's realm.

Now, at such seasons certain tendencies
Are carefully implanted in men's souls,
Which need a long time for full ripening.
In their next life on earth such men as these
Must show strong traces of their previous life.
At these times, many men will be reborn
In their succeeding lives as men—so too
Women as women often re-appear.
At that time also is the interval
Shorter than usual 'twixt two earthly lives.
To understand aright these cyclic points
Thou lackest power, and therefore canst not yet
Survey their growth with eyes from error free.
Call but to mind the time when last we met
In temples of that Spirit-brotherhood:
Then thou spak'st words of flattery, intent
To work upon my vanity of soul.
I recollect this time; and draw therefrom
The strength how to oppose myself to thee.

(*Ahriman withdraws with reluctant mien. Thunder.*)

Defeated he has had to leave the spot
Which Benedictus hath so often blessed.
But unto me hath been made manifest
How lightly souls may into error fall
Who give themselves unto the Spirit-voice
Without due heed, and shun the safer ways.
The Enemy indeed hath mighty power
Life's contradictions to accentuate
And thus rob souls of their security.

He must fall silent when the Light appears
That from the fount of Wisdom issuing
Doth bring full clearness to our spirit-sight.

Curtain, while Maria is still in the room

Scene 12

The same. Johannes and Lucifer.

Lucifer:

Take warning by Capesius' fate and learn
What fruits are ripened when a soul attempts
To penetrate too soon the spirit-world.
He knows the words writ in his book of life
And knows his tasks for many lives to come.
But suffering not ordained by destiny
Is wrought by knowledge which hath not the power
To change itself to deeds in earthly life.
The choice that to successful issue leads
Depends upon the ripeness of the will.
At every step that he would take in life
Henceforth Capesius must ask himself:
Can all my obligations thus be met
Which are the outgrowth of my former lives?
So o'er his path a dazzling light is shed,
Causing his eyes to suffer from the glare
And giving him no help upon his way.
It kills the forces which, whilst still unknown,
Are trusty guides for every human soul,
Yet does not aid the power of conscious thought.
Thus it can only hurt the body's strength
Before the soul hath learned to master it.

Johannes :
I do perceive the error of my life.
The forces of the soul that worked unconsciously
Deep in the body, I did steal from thence
And proudly carried to the spirit heights.
Yet it was not a human being whole
That thus was carried upward to the light.
Nought was it but the shadow of a soul,
Which could but rhapsodize of spirit-realms
And feel a oneness with creative powers ;
It wished to live all blissful in the light,
And deeds of light in colour to behold ;
It fancied that as artist it could paint
Spirit-existence in a world of sense.
This form that took its semblance from mine own
Hath shown to me myself with cruel truth.
I dreamed of soul-love, pure and free from stain,
Whilst passion yet was coursing through my veins.
But now I have beheld the past earth life
From which my present life derives its source :
This shows me whither I must truly strive.
The spirit-pathways which of late I trod
Cannot be followed far by such a soul
As just before its present life on earth
Lived in the body of the miner, Thomas.
The fashion of his life must be for me
The rule by which to seek my present goal.
I've striven for attainment here and now
Of things that only later can bear fruit.

Lucifer :
My light must serve to guide thy further steps
As it hath done to guide them hitherto.

The spirit-path which thou hast sought to tread
Can wed the spirit to the lofty heights,
But to thy soul it bringeth nought but gloom.

Johannes:
What hath a man attained who gives himself
A soul-less puppet to the spirit-world?
E'en at the end of all his earthly days
He is but that same being which he was,
When in earth's primal days his human form
From out the cosmic womb did first emerge.
If to those impulses I yield myself
Which, springing from unfathomed depths of soul,
Clamour imperiously for life and form,
Then in me works the universal all.
I know not then what drives me on to act;
But surely it must be the cosmic will
Which leads me on to its appointed goal.
This will must know the wherefore of man's life
Though human knowledge cannot make it plain.
That which in perfect manhood it creates
Is vital wealth wherewith to form the soul.
To it will I surrender, and no more
By idle spirit-striving kill it out.

Lucifer:
Myself I work in this same cosmic will
When it flows mightily through human souls.
They are but limbs of higher entities
Until they can experience my power.
'Tis only I who make them men indeed
Whose human self stands firm within the world.

Johannes:

I long have thought I knew the whole of thee;
Yet dwelt within me but thy phantom shade
Portrayed there by my visionary dreams.
Now must I feel thee, live thee by my will;
Then can I overcome thee later on
If so 'tis written in my destiny.
Let spirit-knowledge, that I gained too soon,
Repose henceforth within mine inmost soul
Till impulses in life shall call it forth.
With confidence I yield me to that will
That hath more wisdom than the human soul.

(*Exit Johannes with Lucifer.*)

Curtain

Scene 13

The Temple of the Sun; hidden site of the Mysteries of the Hierophants; Lucifer, Ahriman, the three Soul-Figures, Strader, Benedictus, Theodosius, Romanus, Maria.

(*Enter first Lucifer and Ahriman.*)

Lucifer:

The Lord of Wishes stands as victor here—
He hath been able to o'erpower the soul
Which even in the light of spirit-sun
Still had to feel akin to this our realm.
I seized th' auspicious hour in which to cast
A glamour o'er its vision of the light
To which in dreams alone it had bowed down.
Yet all my hopes must forthwith disappear
That victory is ours in spirit-realms,
Since thou art worsted, comrade of my fight.
Thou wast unable to o'erpower the soul
Which was to bring our labours to their goal.
The human soul that gave itself to me
I can possess and in our kingdom hold
For short earth-lives alone, but all in vain;
For then I must restore it to our foes.
To win outright we need the other, too,
That hath withdrawn itself from thy domain.

Ahriman :
The time is not well suited to my arts,
I find no means of access to men's souls.
See, here comes one whom I did sorely plague.
Though ignorant in spirit he draws nigh ;
For reason doth compel him to push on.
So I withdraw from him and from this place
Which he can only tread unconsciously.
(*The three Soul-Figures with Strader.*)

Philia :
I will myself imbue
With power of Faith's clear light,
I will breathe deep within
The living force of Trust
From soul's aspiring joy ;
That thus the light may rouse
The spirit slumberer.

Astrid :
With humble joy of soul
I will inweave forthwith
Sure revelation's word.
I will make dense and thick
The shining rays of Hope ;
That light in dark may shine
And twilight in the light,
So powers may bear aloft
The spirit slumberer.

Luna :
Soul light will I make warm
Love's power will harden too :

That thus they may grow bold
And thus may raise themselves
And mounting up on high
Endow themselves with weight
And free from cosmic loads
The spirit slumberer ;
That his soul's love of light
At last may set him free.

Benedictus :
My comrades, I have hither summoned you
Who with me seek to find the spirit-light
That should flow streaming to the souls of men.
Ye know the nature of the sun of soul ;
Oft doth it shine with fullest noontide glare,
And then again like feeble twilight steal
Powerless through mists of visionary dream.
And often doth the darkness drive it out.
The temple-servants' spirit-gaze must pierce
To soul depths where there shines with powerful ray
The spirit-light that comes from cosmic heights.
Then too it must disclose mysterious aims
That lurk unnoticed in the soul's dark lairs
Intent on shaping man's development.
Those spirit-beings who from cosmic powers
Bestow the spirit-food on human souls
Are present now within the sacred fane
To guide this man's soul from the spirit-night
Into the kingdom of the light on high.
The sleep of knowledge still envelops him ;
But spirit-calls already have been heard
In his soul's depths of which he never knew,

That which they spoke deep in his inmost soul
Will shortly find its way to spirit-ears.

Theodosius :
This soul hath not been able hitherto
To recognize himself in spirit-light
That through sense-revelation is outpoured,
To show the meaning of all earthly growth.
He saw God's spirit stripped of nature's guise,
And Nature's self estranged from deity.
And so through many lives he had to pass
And stay a stranger to the sense of life ;
He could but find such carnal tenements
To carry out his individual work
As barred him from the cosmos and from man.
Now in the temple he will gain the power
Himself in other beings to behold,
And so at length he will attain the force
That leads from out the labyrinths of thought
And points the way unto the springs of life.

Benedictus :
Another man strives to the temple's light ;
Though not at once will he approach its doors
And seek for entrance to this hallowed spot.
Throughout a life of studious research
He planted germs of thought in his soul-depths.
And so perforce the spirit-light went forth
To ripen them outside our temple's doors.
'Twas given him to know his present life
To be the product of a former one
Lived in a time that now hath long gone by.

As to outlast the spirit's wanderings
Then shall the Lord of Wishes find his power
Unable to effect a severance.

Lucifer :
But Benedictus' will itself compelled
Johannes' and Maria's souls to part.
And wheresoe'er men from each other part
There is the field made ready for my power.
I ever work for separateness of soul,
To set the earth-life free, and for all time
To break its servitude to cosmic chains.
Maria's being, in monastic garb,
Turned from its father yonder soul away
That now is dweller in Johannes' form.
This too hath caused some seeds of mine to grow
Which I shall surely bring to ripening.

Maria (turning to Lucifer) :
In human nature there are springs of love
To which thy power can never penetrate.
They are unsealed when faults of former lives—
A load unwittingly assumed by man,—
Are in a later life by spirit seen,
And by the free-will of self-sacrifice
Transformed to earthly action, which shall tend
To bear fruit for the real good of man.
The powers of destiny have granted me
The vision which can penetrate the past ;
Already too have I received the signs
So to direct my free-will sacrifice
That good may pour therefrom for every soul

Whose thread of life shall have to twine with mine
Throughout the evolution of this earth.
I saw how in its earthly frame of yore
Johannes' soul turned from his sire away,
And saw the forces that compelled myself
To make the son repel the father's heart.
Thus is the father now opposed to me
To bring to mind my own offence of old.
Plainly he speaks in cosmic language clear
Whose symbols are the actions of man's life.
That which I set between the sire and son
Must reappear, though in another form
In this my life in which Johannes' soul
Hath once again been closely knit to mine.
The suffering which I had to undergo
In severing Johannes from myself
Was but my own act's fated consequence.
If now my soul is faithful to the light
Which from the spirit-forces comes to it,
It will be strengthened by the services
Which it may render to Capesius
In this sore stress of his life-pilgrimage ;
And with such forces, similarly won,
Will also learn to see Johannes' star
When he, by fetters of desire misled
Treads not the way illumined by the light.
The spirit-vision which hath led me back
To distant days on earth will teach me now
How I must deal with soul-links at this time
So that life-powers unconsciously prepared
Shall henceforth work awakened for man's weal.

Benedictus:

In olden days on earth was formed a knot
Of threads which Karma spins world-fashioning.
Three human lives are interwoven there,
And now upon this fateful knot there shines
This holy temple's lofty spirit-light.
'Tis thee, Maria, I must now address;
Of these three souls at this time thou alone
Art present at the place of sacrifice.
May this light operate within thyself
And turn to welfare those creative powers
Which once upon a time thy life-threads wove
Fast in a life-knot with those other two.
The father could not in his former life
His son's heart find; but now in other scenes
The spirit-seeker will accompany
Thy friend's self on its way to spirit-land.
And thine is now the duty to maintain
Johannes' soul in light by thine own force.
Once didst thou hold it in so fast a bond
That it could only blindly follow thee.
Thou didst then give it back its liberty,
When still it clung to thee in fancy fond.
But thou shalt once more find it, when, self-willed,
It wins its individuality.
If thy soul to that light holds ever true
Which powers from spirit-realms bestow on thee,
Johannes' soul will thirst to drink of thine
E'en where the Lord of all Desire holds sway;
And through the love which holds it bound to thee
It will regain the path to light on high.

For ever must a living being strive
Through light or darkness, which hath once beheld
And known the heights of spirit in its soul.
It hath drawn breath from cosmic distances
Of air that pulseth with immortal life,
And living raiseth all our human kind
From founts of soul to spirit-sun sublime.

Curtain

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